

Water experts meet in Oman

MUSCAT (AP) — International water experts Wednesday concluded a two-day conference on desalinating sea water in the framework of the Middle East peace process, the government said. The meeting was apparently meant to prepare for a similar conference later this month in which Israelis have been openly invited to the Gulf region for the first time. An government statement said the meeting involved experts "from several countries" defining areas of study and development projects in the desalination of water for household use. The statement described the meeting as "an offshoot of the Middle East peacemaking process" and said the outcome so far was "positive and encouraging." No further details were given. An Omani Foreign Ministry official said an Israeli team, due in Muscat to prepare for the April 17-20 conference, did not come. He refused to say why. Water experts from Arab countries, Israel, and sponsors of the peace process are expected to attend the multilateral conference later this month on water shortages in the Middle East.

Jordan Times

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Suicide car-bomber kills seven in Afula

AFULA (Agencies) — A car-bomb, apparently ignited by a suicide attacker, exploded next to a bus taking on Israeli high school students Wednesday, and officials said eight people were killed and about 40 wounded. The Islamic (Hamas) Resistance Movement claimed responsibility in reprisal for the Hebron Mosque massacre.

The explosion erupted about 12:30 p.m. in the centre of Afula, a northern Israeli city surrounded by Arab villages and located near the occupied West Bank town of Jenin 70 kilometres northwest of occupied Jerusalem.

Witnesses said they saw a huge flash when a car parked about three metres from the bus exploded. Many of the victims were teenagers from two nearby junior high schools where some classes had let out.

Police and hospitals said at least eight people were dead and 50 injured.

Hamas said it carried out the attack to avenge the massacre of some dozens of Arabs by a Jewish settler or settlers in Hebron's Ibrahim Mosque on Feb. 25.

A caller to a Western news agency said Hamas used 175 kilograms of explosives.

The caller named the suicide bomber as Raed Zakameh, 19, of Qabatyeh in the occupied West Bank. Police had no immediate comment on the Hamas claim.

Army sources said Zakameh was a fugitive wanted for membership in Hamas.

Moti Lifshitz, director of Haemek hospital, said seven people besides the bomber were killed and 44 others wounded, including 10 in serious condition. Most were teenagers under 18, but some victims were Arabs.

U.S. wants Arafat to condemn attack

THE UNITED STATES Wednesday urged Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat to condemn the car-bombing in Afula.

"We certainly hope that Chairman Arafat would condemn this act of violence," said State Department spokesman Mike McCurry.

"The language would be of the chairman's choosing. But it would be helpful if he expressed himself on this incident," he said.

Some victims were from Brosh junior high school, where students told reporters the teachers made them sit in the hallway with their heads between their legs for 20 minutes after the explosion because they feared further blasts.

A number of youths were treated for shock and psychologists rushed to the scene to calm students.

Witnesses said a shock wave rolled over the area when the car exploded.

Northern region police chief Yaakov Granot said preliminary reports suggested the blast was a suicide attack. It came one day after the end of a 40-day Muslim mourning period for the Hebron victims.

"I am sorry to say that eight people were killed," Mr. Granot told Israeli Radio. He said the driver of the explosives-laden car was among the dead.

"Bodies were seen in the street, on fences, on trees. There were dead with their legs and heads blown off," a fire fighter said. The car's steering wheel was found some 30 metres from the bus stop where the vehicle exploded.

The explosion coincided with talks in Cairo between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation on implementing their peace deal. Environment Minister Yossi Sarid, who has negotiated with the PLO in previous rounds, said the peace process would not be affected by the attack.

"Why stop? So that terror will increase, spread and be threatened?" he told army radio. "If the peace process is stopped, we are placing our fate in the hands of... these suicide bombers — and that is their wish."

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres conceded that "it is clear that when an incident like this happens support for the peace process dwindles." But he and other officials signalled they would shoulder ahead with peace talks.

Like the killings in Hebron, which took place inside a mosque on a day of prayer in the Holy Month of Ramadan, the Afula attack resonated all the more intensely in Israel because of the teenage casualties and because it came on the eve of Holocaust day, when Israel mourns the killing of Jews at the hands of Nazi Germans.

Opponents of the peace talks organised demonstrations in numerous cities. In Afula, students chanted "death to Arabs" and "Baruch Goldstein, we love you." Goldstein carried out the Hebron attack.

Benjamin Netanyahu, the leader of the right-wing Likud party, called on Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin to suspend the talks just as the PLO did after the Hebron massacre.

Police forces were sent into nearby Arab villages to protect residents from reprisal attacks. Residents of the occupied ter-



Paramedics cover a body next to the bus which was hit by a car-bomb on Wednesday in the Israeli town of Afula (AFP photo)

Jerusalem inseparably linked to Islam — Crown Prince

Prince urges religious scholars to promote positive thinking, highlight Islamic ties

3-day meeting decries U.S. stand on Holy City

AMMAN — (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan on Wednesday called on Muslim and Christian scholars to promote the scope of Christian-Muslim dialogue and to highlight Islam's position vis-a-vis Jerusalem.

Addressing a three-day meeting on Jerusalem which ended at the King Abdullah Mosque Wednesday, Prince Hassan said scholars also had the duty to clarify Islam's positive relations with the Christians throughout the ages.

The meeting coincided with preparations by some people (in the west) to observe the 3,000th year of "founding" Jerusalem, Prince Hassan said. "We have to discuss and prove by science and research that Jerusalem existed before David and after him," the Crown Prince said. "We do not talk about this in mere rhetoric or in an emotional manner. We seek to remind the world of the historic era which are linked together starting from the Canaanites and the other Arabs," the Crown Prince said in an address to the 40 scholars gathered at Basman Palace.

"I wanted to talk to you today about what we can call divine sovereignty over Jerusalem that does not conflict with political sovereignty. I would like to point out that divine sovereignty derives its dignity and esteem from its value and from the morals of



the faithful who believe in it," Prince Hassan said. "In this context, we can only express pride in the Al al Baith University, which is due to embark on the experiment of setting up an institute for Christian studies," he noted.

"We hope this institute, (the first of its kind in the region), would yield good results because we believe that the time has come for the world to realise that this nation has always been oriented towards promoting culture," the Crown Prince said.

Addressing the delegates, Prince Hassan said: "You have to enhance the concept of the holiness of the city of Jerusalem and promote dialogue among the religions and reaffirm the status of the Holy City for the Christians and Muslims."

"We are facing a historic moment entitled 'survival of the more competent' in exchange for the survival of the more competent," he said.

Mr. Assad on Tuesday wrapped a two-day visit to Egypt. Negotiations between Syria and Israel have been at an

imasse since the opening of the Madrid peace conference in October 1991, stalled over the issue of the Golan Heights.

Egypt, which has strong ties with Damascus, supported the PLO-Israeli peace deal for limited Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho which was signed in Washington in September following secret talks in Norway.

It also backed two other deals signed in Cairo to pave the way for implementation of the accord, but Damascus strongly condemned the pacts and accused the PLO of abandoning Palestinian rights and dealing a blow to Arab coordination.

Mr. Berlusconi counters by saying the league owes its seats to voter backing for Forza Italia.

The abrasive Bossi has vetoed Mr. Berlusconi as prime minister, dubbing the entrepreneur "Berluscaiser."

Mr. Bossi says his vast media interests make him a threat to democracy.

League Senator Francesco Speroni on Wednesday accused Mr. Berlusconi of acting as if he had been elected to run the country presidential-style.

"The danger for democracy comes from Berlusconi declar-

Jordan, PLO focus on committees' work

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat said on Wednesday he had briefed His Majesty King Hussein on the progress of Palestinian-Israeli negotiations and discussed with the Monarch Jordanian-Palestinian coordination.

Mr. Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), said he and the King agreed to convene meetings of the joint committees announced last year. Committees on Jerusalem, economic cooperation and refugees are expected to meet soon. Other committees deal with water-sharing, laws and regulations, and border and security.

Mr. Arafat, addressing reporters shortly before leaving for Cairo after overnight talks with King Hussein, said the Monarch offered to send Jordanian experts to help the PLO in negotiations on economic and monetary issues.

A round of Israel-PLO talks on economic cooperation was scheduled to open in Paris on Wednesday.

Mr. Arafat said he was demanding an Israeli military withdrawal from the occupied Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho by April 13 as envisaged in the Sept. 13 autonomy accord signed between the PLO and Israel.

He said that although Israeli troops had started evacuating some of their military posts and installations in the areas to

come under Palestinian autonomy the PLO was not formally notified of the Jewish state's intentions.

"It is imperative that all Israeli troops evacuate the (self-rule) areas by that date (April 13), and we insist that the date of the self-rule agreement be respected," Mr. Arafat said.

The Sept. 13 accord set April 13 as the date for the completion of Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and Jericho, but Israel-PLO negotiations on the implementation of the accord have delayed the entire process.

"It is true that the Israelis have started evacuating some of the military bases in Gaza and Jericho but until now we have not been officially notified... where to send our police forces to take over those areas," said Mr. Arafat. "We hope to have an answer soon."

The talks between King Hussein and Mr. Arafat also dealt with the details of the PLO's negotiations with Israel and issues related to the deployment of Palestinian police in Gaza and Jericho.

Mr. Arafat's visit here came amid intense negotiations in Cairo between PLO and Israeli negotiators to thrash out details of implementing the Sept. 13 accord.

The visit was also seen as aimed at fulfilling a promise Mr. Arafat has made to keep Jordan abreast of all develop-

(Continued on page 5)

Yemeni leaders said committed to unity

SANAA (R) — Yemen's feuding leaders have failed to agree on ways to end their political crisis but are determined to maintain the union of the north and south, official sources said on Wednesday.

An official Yemeni source said talks hosted by Oman on Sunday and Monday between President Ali Abdullah Saleh and his estranged deputy Ali Salem Al Beidh failed to produce concrete results.

But he said the talks, meant to avert a slide towards civil war, helped stress the need for a speedy implementation of a reconciliation accord signed by Mr. Saleh and Mr. Beidh in Jordan in February for reforms in the country that they merged in 1990.

"Although the meetings did not bring about the aspired results... they helped stress the need to stick to the accord and the speedy implementation of cabinet decisions," the official SABA news agency quoted the unnamed official as saying.

One political source said the Oman talks "were marked by an initial thaw between Saleh and Beidh at the personal level. Their aides however remain intransigent."

The official Al Thawra newspaper on Wednesday struck an optimistic note saying "removal of the crisis signs and a thaw in the domestic Yemeni differences are just

a question of time."

It said the talks in Oman "defused animosity between the president and his deputy and restored cordiality between them."

"This cordiality is one of the ways out of the crisis and could not be ignored because it is an important foundation for any meeting or dialogue to lay down radical solutions to our problems."

Oman expressed frustration on Monday at the two men's inability to resolve their differences. It announced it would pull out of a multi-national team trying to disengage northern and southern armies after clashes last month.

Political sources in Sanaa said Saleh Mohammad, a senior official in the Beidh's Yemen Socialist Party (YSP), had left for Saudi Arabia on Tuesday for talks with Saudi officials.

They said he was expected to later visit Cairo, where press reports have said that Mr. Saleh and Mr. Beidh might meet again.

An Egyptian peace envoy who shuttled between Aden and Sanaa for the past 13 days returned home on Tuesday saying his government would reconsider its mediation efforts in the light of the failure of the Oman talks.

YSP sources attributed the

(Continued on page 5)

Accord on deployment of Palestinian police still elusive

CAIRO (Agencies) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) chief delegate said Wednesday that an agreement on deploying Palestinian police in the Gaza Strip and Jericho was again delayed and complained the Israelis had cut short the negotiations.

However, Nabil Shaath's comment came after PLO chairman Yasser Arafat apparently either rejected or had questions about a schedule worked out by the two sides for deploying the police in Gaza and the West Bank town.

Dr. Shaath had said earlier that a schedule for deployment was worked out but needed Mr. Arafat's approval. At the same time, he said the deployment also depended on setting a date for signing a formal agreement on implementing Palestinian autonomy in Gaza and Jericho.

"If the date of the signing is fixed, then the rest of the calendar has been totally and in detail fixed," Dr. Shaath had said.

But later, after Dr. Shaath returned from a meeting with Mr. Arafat, the Israeli delegates left for home. The chief Israeli delegate, Major General Amnon Shahak, said only that they would be back Sunday for further talks.

The Israelis had been expected to depart sometime Wednesday afternoon to be home before sundown, the start of a memorial to the Jews killed in World War II.

The departure also came after a car-bomb exploded in the northern Israeli city of Afula, killing at least eight people and wounding more than 50. The Palestinian group Hamas, which opposes the peace process, claimed responsibility for the attack.

Dr. Shaath did not outline Mr. Arafat's response to the tentative deployment schedule.

He complained that the Israelis' departure meant that the negotiators were unlikely to reach agreement by April

13, the date set in last September's PLO-Israeli accord for Israel to actually complete its withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho.

Noting that separate PLO-Israeli talks on economic issues in Paris were following a schedule of meetings through the next several days, Dr. Shaath said:

"If it (this schedule) had been applied to these negotiations, they would have finished on time."

He added, however, that the Israeli delegates agreed to continue negotiations by fax and telephone and said he hoped that an agreement could be worked out by Monday, still ahead of the deadline.

Asked about the Afula bombing, Dr. Shaath said only peace could prevent more killings on both sides, mentioning Palestinian deaths in Gaza and the slaying of dozens by a Jewish settler in Hebron on Feb. 25.

"One of the important reasons we are pushing for a signing of this agreement is to stop all these killings, whether in Gaza, Hebron or Afula," he said. "It is a reminder we need to sign the agreement."

Maj. Gen. Nasr Yousef, who will head the Palestinian police, also expressed regret at the deaths in the northern Israeli town.

"The continuation of acts of violence is a very sorry thing and we do not support it," he told reporters. "We are exerting all our effort to rid the region of acts of violence."

The departure of Israeli negotiators was a setback for the peace process.

"We see there are delays for no reason," he said. "The negotiation should depart today, which will cause a delay in the talks," asked Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa.

Mr. Musa was speaking after Mr. Arafat, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Dr. Shaath met at Mr. Mubarak's palace in Cairo.

Gen. Yousef said the negotiators were waiting for Mr. Arafat to resolve the problems holding up agreement on the police force deployment.

The two sides differ on how fast the handover of authority should be. Israel wants a small group of Palestinian policemen to move into the occupied territories early, to learn the lie of the land and prepare the way for the full force of about 9,000 men.

The Palestinians, impatient to see the Israelis go and wary of collaborating too closely, want Israel to set a firm timetable for their withdrawal before they commit themselves too far on the initial deployment.

Dr. Shaath hinted at differences between the civilian and military wings of the Palestinian negotiating team.

"Security people like to see things very specifically defined. They do not like to work with uncertainty. I see how once can plan with a little uncertainty," he added.

Dr. Shaath, asked if Palestinian commanders were worried about compromising their men by deploying while the Israelis were still present in Gaza and Jericho in force, said: "There are possible visions of that."

The PLO negotiator also appealed for donors to come forward quickly with cash and equipment for the Palestinian police.

"With the exception of Norway which has provided some cash and uniforms, and Greece, which has given a loan, nothing has come from the others yet," he said.

In Gaza City, in the occupied Gaza Strip, Palestinians cancelled plans to receive the keys to the first Israeli police station to be handed over as part of a power transfer in Gaza because of snags in the autonomy negotiations, an official said.

Assad seeks to revive peace talks

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — Syrian President Hafez Al Assad and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak stressed during their talks in Cairo the need to reactivate the Arab track of peace talks with Israel, a Syrian official said Wednesday.

Mohammad Khair Al Wadi, editor of the government daily Tishreen who accompanied Mr. Assad during his visit to Cairo, quoted the Syrian leader as saying Israel was trying to foil the peace process by trying to arrange separate and secret deals with Arabs.

Such pacts could not bring peace to the region, Mr. Wadi said. He did not mention the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) by name.

Tishreen said that the Cairo summit had improved chances of a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

Tishreen also said the common stand by Syria and Egypt would "fortify Arab ranks against any Zionist penetration attempts."

Syria has long called for a comprehensive peace settlement, meaning that it opposes separate moves towards peace by each of the Arab parties involved. However, it has not condemned outright the Israeli-PLO peace accord reached in September.

Mr. Assad on Tuesday wrapped a two-day visit to Egypt. Negotiations between Syria and Israel have been at an

imasse since the opening of the Madrid peace conference in October 1991, stalled over the issue of the Golan Heights.

Egypt, which has strong ties with Damascus, supported the PLO-Israeli peace deal for limited Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho which was signed in Washington in September following secret talks in Norway.

It also backed two other deals signed in Cairo to pave the way for implementation of the accord, but Damascus strongly condemned the pacts and accused the PLO of abandoning Palestinian rights and dealing a blow to Arab coordination.

Berlusconi party threatens to force new elections

ROME (R) — Media magnate Silvio Berlusconi's Forza Italia party threatened on Wednesday to force another general election if federalist leader Umberto Bossi persisted in blocking talks on formation of a new government.

"If Umberto Bossi betrays the popular will once more, impeding the formation of a government that governs, there will be no alternative but to return to the ballot box," the party said in a statement.

Forza Italia, the party set up by billionaire Berlusconi on his entry into politics less than three months ago, said the electorate would be sure to punish Mr. Bossi.

"It will be left to the voters to wipe out the old-style politics so dear to the honourable Bossi," the statement added.

Mr. Berlusconi on Tuesday broke off government talks with Northern League leader

Bossi, his ally in the Freedom Alliance which emerged triumphant from general elections last week, after Mr. Bossi delivered ultimatums on federalism and the premiership.

Forza Italia accused Mr. Bossi of changing his ideas by the day and betraying the wishes of voters.

"Italy is not a banana republic where the popular will can be betrayed by the first party leader who wants to preserve his slice of power without caring a damn about the country's problems," its statement said.

Newspapers on Wednesday published editorials and comments from ordinary Italians slamming Mr. Bossi.

"By breaking off his dialogue with Bossi, Berlusconi has freed us from one of the most degrading spectacles in recent Italian political life," La Stampa newspaper commented.

Mr. Berlusconi counters by saying the league owes its seats to voter backing for Forza Italia.

The abrasive Bossi has vetoed Mr. Berlusconi as prime minister, dubbing the entrepreneur "Berluscaiser."

Mr. Bossi says his vast media interests make him a threat to democracy.

League Senator Francesco Speroni on Wednesday accused Mr. Berlusconi of acting as if he had been elected to run the country presidential-style.

"The danger for democracy comes from Berlusconi declar-

ing himself prime minister, in defiance of all the rules of the constitution," Mr. Speroni said in a statement.

The league announced it would hold talks with the Centrist Pact for Italy, among the election losers, on a constituent assembly to give the country a federal structure.

But pact leader Mario Segni said he had not heard from the league and could not say if or when any talks would take place.

The Freedom Alliance, which also includes the neo-fascist National Alliance plus two smaller centrist groups, won an absolute majority in the lower house.

But the formation of Italy's 53rd post-war government looks set to be a tortuous process with the Berlusconi-Bossi rift putting matters on hold until parliament convenes

on April 15.

Parliament's first task will be to elect speakers of its two houses who must then confer with President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro on the nomination of a prime minister with the task of attempting to stitch together a government.

Political commentators said they believed that the Freedom Alliance would eventually be able to form a government but added that delay seemed inevitable with the administration unlikely to take office before mid-May.

It may also be flawed by the antagonism shown by Mr. Bossi and neo-fascist Gianfranco Fini, the other partner in Mr. Berlusconi's alliance. "I don't want a government which Bossi brings down as soon as he sees something he doesn't approve of — like perhaps the first time we make a law which helps the south," Mr. Fini said.

مكتبة من الأصل

Prince praises army's innovative skills

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Tuesday toured several construction and water harvest projects.

Prince Hassan commenced his tour at the Armed Forces' Al Hussein workshops where he inspected work progress. After seeing an out-of-service military tank turned into a bulldozer for agricultural use by the workshops, Prince Hassan commended the performance of the Armed Forces in using modern technology to improve the conditions and performance of machinery.

He visited an exhibition of locally-produced spare parts and was familiarised with several projects carried out by the army in cooperation with Jordanian universities and institutions, such as a remote-control plane project carried out in cooperation with the Jordan University of Science and Technology.

Prince Hassan also visited several dam projects carried out by the Royal Engineers force in various parts of Jordan, such as Al Geelat Dam, located 100 kilometres south-east of Amman, which, once finished, can hold more than 90,000 cubic metres of water.

After visiting several construction projects, Prince Hassan met with representatives of Al Husseiniya town in the presence of Sheikh Faisal Al Jazi and representatives of the bedouins of southern Jordan in the Lower House of Parliament.

New Hebron mayor wants mosque opened

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — The new Palestinian mayor of Hebron called on Wednesday for Israeli authorities to reopen the mosque where a Jewish settler massacred dozens of Muslim worshippers six weeks ago.

"We wish to open the mosque. It is very important and vital for the city... the tension will go down," Mustafa Natsheh said in a telephone interview.

After the Feb. 25 massacre Israel closed the site and has maintained a curfew on the old city of Hebron, where the main Jewish settler enclaves in Hebron are located, in apparent fear of revenge attacks.

Mr. Natsheh, deposed by Israeli occupation authorities in 1983, took up his post on Sunday as part of a deal between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) on security arrangements for the West Bank city.

Under that deal, 160 armed international observers from Norway, Denmark and Italy will deploy in Hebron. Mr. Natsheh dismissed any fears for their safety following a purported threat by the Islamic Jihad to attack them.

"I don't think they are in danger. They are coming to help. So why injure them," he said.

Mr. Natsheh said he was travelling to Cairo on Wednesday to brief PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat on the situation in Hebron.

"We are going to give a real picture of the city — the curfew, the closure of the centre, the stoppage of industry — in order that he will support us in all fields."

Mr. Natsheh said Hebron needed \$50 million in urgent financial aid from the international community to fund development projects.

Denmark confirmed on Wednesday it would send police to the European observer force being sent to monitor security in Hebron.

"Parliament has today given us the green light to station 35 Danish policemen and civil observers in Hebron as part of the European Corps," Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen said.

He was speaking after the parliamentary foreign affairs committee gave the government backing to send the contribution to a 160-man force due to be set up in Hebron in coming weeks.

"It is vital for the further progress of the Middle East peace process that the observer corps is in place in Hebron," Mr. Rasmussen told reporters.

He said the exact nature of the peace observers' operation would be made clear next week, when police experts from the three contributing nations visited Hebron and talked with the Israeli authorities and Palestinian representatives.

Mustafa Natsheh

"The corps will not be conducting an actual peacekeeping operation. The idea is that they monitor events and report back to the local town hall and Israeli or Palestinian representatives," Mr. Rasmussen said.

"Every single incident which could potentially spark off a conflict will have to be reported to the local authorities in Hebron," he added.

Wednesday marked the fortieth and final day of Palestinian community mourning for the Palestinians shot and killed in the Ibrahimim Mosque in Feb. 25.

The Danish national news agency Ritzau said a delegation of diplomats from Denmark, Italy and Norway postponed a planned visit to Hebron on Wednesday for fear of civil unrest.

The agency quoted Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres as saying he hoped the 160 observers would be able to take up their duties in Hebron next week.

Clashes in S. Lebanon

MARJAYOUN (AP) — Resistance fighters and pro-Israeli militiamen fought artillery and rocket duels in South Lebanon Wednesday. Security sources said one militiaman and seven civilians were wounded.

The fighting began at mid-afternoon, when Hizbollah guerrillas fired mortars at a South Lebanon Army (SLA) outpost in the village of Beit Leit on the edge of the Israeli-occupied zone, injuring the SLA member.

Israeli and SLA gunners retaliated with artillery shells on suspected guerrilla hideouts in villages facing the western sector of the border strip.

The guerrillas then responded with sustained barrages of Katyusha rockets. One rocket destroyed a house in Beit Leit and several others crashed in nearby 'Bin Ibil and Dibil, where the seven villagers suffered shrapnel wounds.

3 Algerian Islamist leaders to be tried

TUNIS (R) — Three Algerian Muslim militant leaders, including the former head of the banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), are to go on trial in Algeria later this year, the Algerian newspaper *Liberte* said.

Liberte quoted unidentified sources as saying one of the three men, Abdul Haq Layada, would be tried in June by a special court.

It identified the other two men as Abdul Kader Hachani, provisional president of the executive office of the FIS, and Charati Yeklef, a leading FIS member. They will be tried in the third quarter of 1994.

Mr. Layada was arrested in Morocco and extradited to Algeria in late 1993. He is considered the head of the most active Islamic militant group in the suburbs of Algiers.

Mr. Hachani took over as leader of the FIS in July 1993 after the arrest of its prominent leaders a month earlier. He had been in detention since early 1992 after the army-backed authorities cancelled an election the fundamentalists were poised to win.

The special tribunals were created in late 1992 to help combat the wave of violence in which 3,200 people have been killed so far.

Mr. Yeklef was arrested in the suburbs of Algiers late in 1993 for his alleged support of armed groups.

'FIS network found'

French police have uncovered an Algerian Muslim fundamentalists network in France and arrested two suspected members of the banned FIS. Europe 1 radio reported.

The radio said police found an arms cache belonging to the FIS and arrested the two suspected militants on March 2, in Lille in northern France.

Europe 1 quoted investigators as saying they had discovered a network which served as a logistical base for the FIS — the first of its kind on French territory.

Police seized an Israeli-made sniper gun, ammunition and hundreds of false Algerian identity cards and unspecified documents. Police were looking for a third suspect, it said.

The radio added that anti-terrorism experts believed there were other such caches and networks in France but that the FIS did not plan to attack targets in France.

There was no immediate confirmation of the report.

Expulsion suspended

A French court on Wednesday suspended an expulsion order against two Algerian teenagers sent to Algiers at the height of protests against a youth wage law.

Justiciary sources said the court in Lyon ruled the expulsion was not an emergency and must be suspended pending a final decision on whether it was justified.

They said the ruling allowed Abdul Hakim Yoube, 18, and Mouloud Malaci, 19, to return home to Lyon.

The youths, long-time residents of France, were expelled on March 22 after they were accused of stoning police and looting. Algeria has refused to let them in and they have since been stranded in the transit area in the port of Algiers.

Human rights groups have protested that they "are expelled before a court would decide

JORDAN TELEVISION Tel. 411 PROGRAMME TWO 7:30 Tiratara in French 8:00 8:15 Movie Feature 8:30 Announcements 8:45 In Hebrew 9:00 In Arabic 9:15 In English 9:30 9:45 "Good Story" PRAYERS 8:45: Fajr 9:00: Sunrise Dua 12:30: Dhur 16:12: 'Asr 19:03: Maghreb 21:22: Isha CHURCHES Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541. Anglican Church Tel. 630851. Tel. 628543. Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331. Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261. St. Nicholas Church Tel. 771251. American International Church Tel. 625253. Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 623528. German-speaking Evangelical congregation Tel. 625927. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Tel. 654932. Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691. The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 611295. WEATHER Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology. Temperatures will drop slightly and humidity will rise with winds becoming easterly moderate. In Aqaba, dust and wind conditions will be severe with gale force winds. 10:00: 12/20 12:30: 18/29 16:00: 10/23 19:00: 15/27	JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR EMERGENCIES Civil Defence Department..... 661111 Civil Defence Immediate Rescue..... 630341 Civil Defence Emergency..... 199 Police Police..... 112, 62111, 637777 Fire Department..... 691228 Civil Defence..... 775131 Highway Police..... 843402 Traffic Police..... 966990 Public Security Department..... 630321 Hotel Complaints..... 605800 Price Complaints..... 661176 Water and Sewerage Complaints..... 691913 Amman Municipality..... 897467 Complaints..... 787111 Telephone Information (directory assistance)..... 121 Overseas Calls..... 07/230 Central Amman Telephone Rm. 10..... 623191 Rm. 11..... 661101 Jordan Electricity..... 681061 Jordan Electricity Authority..... 516105 Electric Power Company..... 636381 RJ Flight Information..... 08-53200	Other Flights (Terminal 2) 11:40: Algiers (AA) 11:45: Riyadh (SU) 17:45: Doha (EM) 18:00: Cairo (MS) 23:20: Istanbul (TK) 01:25: Amsterdam (KL) NEAZ RAILWAY TRAIN Dep. Amman..... 8:00 a.m. every Monday Arr. Damascus..... 5:00 p.m. every Monday Dep. Damascus..... 7:30 a.m. every Sunday Arr. Amman..... 5:00 p.m. every Sunday MARKET PRICES Uppertower price in file per kg. Apple..... 550/650 Banana..... 680 Banana (Mukammal)..... 620 Cabbage..... 150/180 Carrot..... 230/160 Cauliflower..... 140/80 Cucumber..... 260/200 Cucumbers (large)..... 140/80 Cucumbers (small)..... 220/150 Eggplant..... 230/160 Garlic..... 1000/800 Grape Fruit..... 280/170 Green Beans..... 460/300 Lemon..... 130/160 Marrow (large)..... 140/80 Marrow (small)..... 260/150 Mushkhalah..... 480/380 Orange..... 300/150 Onion (dry)..... 450/220 Onion (green)..... 280/160 Peas..... 700/450 Pepper (hot)..... 350/360 Pepper (sweet)..... 560/340 Potato..... 380/220 Radish..... 100/40 Tomato..... 400/250 Spinach..... 250/170 String beans..... 570/315
QUEEN ALIA INTL. AIRPORT 08-53200 HOSPITALS Al-Hussein Medical Centre..... 813813/333 Al-Hussein Maternity, J. Amn..... 644281/6 Al-Hussein Maternity, J. Amn..... 6-24412 Al-Hussein Maternity..... 612362 Mahjoub, J. Amman..... 636140 Palestine, Shmeisani..... 664171/4 Shmeisani Hospital..... 669131 University Hospital..... 848485 Al-Musharraf Hospital..... 6672719 The Islamic, Abdali..... 666127/37 Al-Ahli, Abdali..... 664164/6 Italian, Al-Muhajra..... 777101/3 Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh..... 775111/26 Army, Marka..... 891611/5 Queen Alia Hospital..... 662240/50 Amal Hospital..... 674155 ZARQA: Zargo Govt. Hospital..... (09)983333 Zargo National Hospital..... (09)902560 Ibn Sina Hospital..... (09)673732 Princess Haya Hospital..... (09)26280 Princess Basma Hospital..... (02)275555 Greek Catholic Hospital..... (02)272275 Ibn Al-Nafies Hospital..... (02)247100 AQA: Turino, Larana (RJ)..... 21:55 Cairo (RJ)..... 23:30	EMERGENCIES Civil Defence Department..... 661111 Civil Defence Immediate Rescue..... 630341 Civil Defence Emergency..... 199 Police Police..... 112, 62111, 637777 Fire Department..... 691228 Civil Defence..... 775131 Highway Police..... 843402 Traffic Police..... 966990 Public Security Department..... 630321 Hotel Complaints..... 605800 Price Complaints..... 661176 Water and Sewerage Complaints..... 691913 Amman Municipality..... 897467 Complaints..... 787111 Telephone Information (directory assistance)..... 121 Overseas Calls..... 07/230 Central Amman Telephone Rm. 10..... 623191 Rm. 11..... 661101 Jordan Electricity..... 681061 Jordan Electricity Authority..... 516105 Electric Power Company..... 636381 RJ Flight Information..... 08-53200 NIGHT DUTY Dr. Ramazi Mzawi..... 794788 Dr. Khalil Jbali..... 740740 Dr. Walid Masri..... 675485 Dr. Mohamad Shuaqir..... 757253 First pharmacy..... 661913 Fardows pharmacy..... 778336 Al Asana pharmacy..... 637055 Naizekhi pharmacy..... 626672 Al Salam pharmacy..... 640485 Jacob pharmacy..... 637066 Shmeisani pharmacy..... 647452 DEPARTURES Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1) 07:00: Beirut (RJ) 08:00: Agaba (RJ) 10:50: Agaba, Rome (RJ) 11:45: Abu Dhabi, Al Ain (RJ) 12:00: Rome (RJ) 12:30: Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ) 12:45: Turino (RJ) 12:50: Montreal, Toronto (RJ) 13:00: Paris (RJ) 13:15: Larana, Athens (RJ) 13:15: London (RJ) 13:30: Cairo (RJ) 14:45: Jeddah (RJ) 15:00: Doha (RJ) 22:45: Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta (RJ) 01:15: Dubai, Muscat (RJ) Other Flights (Terminal 2) 05:55: Damascus, Paris (AF) 09:30: Beirut (ME) 12:30: Algiers (AA) 15:15: Riyadh (SA) 18:45: Doha (EM) 21:55: Cairo (MS) 02:25: Amsterdam (KL)	Other Flights (Terminal 2) 11:40: Algiers (AA) 11:45: Riyadh (SU) 17:45: Doha (EM) 18:00: Cairo (MS) 23:20: Istanbul (TK) 01:25: Amsterdam (KL) NEAZ RAILWAY TRAIN Dep. Amman..... 8:00 a.m. every Monday Arr. Damascus..... 5:00 p.m. every Monday Dep. Damascus..... 7:30 a.m. every Sunday Arr. Amman..... 5:00 p.m. every Sunday MARKET PRICES Uppertower price in file per kg. Apple..... 550/650 Banana..... 680 Banana (Mukammal)..... 620 Cabbage..... 150/180 Carrot..... 230/160 Cauliflower..... 140/80 Cucumber..... 260/200 Cucumbers (large)..... 140/80 Cucumbers (small)..... 220/150 Eggplant..... 230/160 Garlic..... 1000/800 Grape Fruit..... 280/170 Green Beans..... 460/300 Lemon..... 130/160 Marrow (large)..... 140/80 Marrow (small)..... 260/150 Mushkhalah..... 480/380 Orange..... 300/150 Onion (dry)..... 450/220 Onion (green)..... 280/160 Peas..... 700/450 Pepper (hot)..... 350/360 Pepper (sweet)..... 560/340 Potato..... 380/220 Radish..... 100/40 Tomato..... 400/250 Spinach..... 250/170 String beans..... 570/315



REVAMPING THE SYSTEM: Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Wednesday addresses a meeting attended by Minister of Education Khaled Omari and directors of education departments. Dr. Majali said that it is incumbent on educationists to draw up and implement the appropriate mechanisms to bring about the desired change to the country's educational system. The ministry has a duty to put into force the democratic policies of the government in its schools that

would raise competent generations of young people capable of coping with the requirements of the modern age, said Dr. Majali. Democracy in dealing with the students and respecting the views of all should be enhanced because it would create the proper educational climate for students and society at large, Dr. Majali added. At the outset of the meeting, Dr. Omari briefed the group on school building plans and other education-related projects (Petra photo)

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Majali opens society premises

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali Wednesday inaugurated in Amman the new premises of the South Jordan Charitable Society. In an opening address, Dr. Majali said the society does not aim to serve any factional purposes, but was established initially by University of Jordan students coming from south Jordan in view of the remoteness of the university from the south Jordan areas. The premises, he said, provide suitable lodging for more than 60 students for free.

Minister opens laboratory in Irbid

IRBID (Petra) — Minister of Health Abdul Rahim Malhas Wednesday visited Irbid Governorate where he met with Governor Fayez Al Abbadi and discussed with him health-related issues. Dr. Malhas and the governor then opened the Irbid governorate's central laboratory which will be used to examine samples sent by the governorate's health centres and private sector physicians.

Yarmouk University, ESCWA sign agreement

AMMAN (Petra) — A technical cooperation agreement Wednesday was signed between Yar-

mouk University and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) at the university in Irbid. The agreement was signed on behalf of ESCWA by its executive secretary Sabah Bakjaji, and on behalf of the university by its president, Marwan Kamal. It aims to upgrade cooperation between the university and ESCWA in all fields of research and training. The agreement provides conferences and seminars and cooperation in conducting studies on issues of common interest, in addition to exchanging expertise in various academic and scientific fields.

11-day workshop targets poverty

AMMAN (Petra) — A workshop on income-generating projects and curbing the poverty rate in Palestinian refugee camps Wednesday was opened in Amman. Some 27 participants from Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip are participating in the 11-day workshop, organised by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) and the Near East Foundation (NEF), a non-governmental organisation offering training and development programmes. The workshop aims to improve the performance of relief workers and spreading awareness of the importance of launching income-generating projects in refugee camps to tackle poverty.

Green belt planned to stem desertification

By Elia Nasrallah
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A team of experts from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is due here towards the end of April to examine details of a planned green belt project to stem desertification on the eastern fringes of Jordan. The project is expected to be implemented shortly by the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment.

Saleh Al Sharee, director of the ministry's Environment Department told the Jordan Times that the UNEP has given its initial consent to grant the department \$8 million to help it carry out the project.

"We plan to set up a three to five-kilometre-wide green belt of trees, shrubs and other vegetation along a 330-kilometre stretch from the north to the south of Jordan, in order to stem the encroachment of desert land westwards," said Dr. Sharee.

"Tree, shrub and pasture land cultivation will take place on lands located between the dry or semi-desert areas; the plants will be selected to suit each area," said Dr. Sharee.

He said the UNEP team will be taken on tours of the region to obtain first-hand look at the situation and to recommend steps to be taken

in creating the green belt which will serve as a natural barrier to the desert.

Dr. Sharee said that the ministry will enlist the assistance of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Water and Irrigation as well as the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN) in implementing the scheme.

He confirmed an earlier statement by Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs Ahmad Akaileh who said that the ministry was currently working on a suitable mechanism for the implementation of the project which will be executed over several years.

RSCN President Anis Muasher said that some tribes and settlements have destroyed the vegetation layer in the eastern parts of the country near the dry lands by plowing the land to grow cereals. He said these areas receive negligible amount of rainfall and could produce nothing.

"Over time, the land dried up, the wind blew off the top soil because it had lost the vegetation cover that protected it," said Mr. Muasher.

According to Dr. Sharee, when the UNEP grant starts to arrive, the Department of Environment will embark on the first stage of the green belt project, probably before the end of this year, he added.

Extraordinary House session expected towards late April

By Natasha Bukhari
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Lower House of Parliament is expected to hold its extraordinary session during the last week of April, parliamentary sources disclosed Wednesday.

Both the executive and legislative authorities are debating the issue, but lawmakers maintain that the session is most likely to convene in late April, especially since some international sources, they say, are pressuring the government to endorse the sales tax draft legislation.

According to Minister of Finance, Sami Gammoh, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) refuses to negotiate with the government about the country's national debt until the sales tax draft law is endorsed. "The IMF considers the draft legislation an indispensable pillar for economic reform," Mr. Gammoh was quoted as saying in Al-Dustour daily on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, Deputy Deeb Abdullah (Amman First District) told the Jordan Times that members of Parliament were meeting with government figures Wednesday evening to finally agree on a date to convene the House's extraordinary session, which, according to the deputy, would have the sales draft legislation at the top of its agenda.

Parliamentary sources said that some lawmakers were in favour of delaying the session until August, but the government cannot afford such a delay because of the urgency to approve the draft sales tax law.

Some deputies, however, say that a compromise agreement by which lawmakers could convene a lengthy three-month session instead of a short two-month one is under way.

About 20 deputies are also requiring a grace period during the extraordinary session to perform the pilgrimage (hajj), according to the sources.

As for the agenda of the session, lawmakers expressed their wish to include discussions on other issues after the draft sales tax legislation is approved. There are many unanswered questions that require attention, JAF Deputy Abdul Aziz Jaber told the Jordan Times.

Meanwhile, the House Judiciary Committee is reviewing two approved draft legislations after receiving complaints from different sectors concerning the "injustice" of some articles of the tenancy and municipal councils' draft laws.

The House's approval of the tenancy draft law raised the disapproval of hundreds of downtown Amman traders

who charged that the draft law gives the owners the right to evict the traders from their rented properties, thus causing them (the merchants) many losses as they would have to move their businesses to other areas, which would mean losing regular customers as well as large sums of money.

Municipal council members also disapproved of the draft law on municipalities passed by the house last month, saying that they were not even consulted and that they (council members) would know better what was in the best interest of their municipalities. They added that the draft law gives the government the right to end the council membership of newly appointed citizens before they are given the chance to serve their municipalities.

Deputies have been criticised for passing the laws "irrespective of the needs and requirements of their voters," charged several members of municipal councils.

According to the Constitution, the agenda of the extraordinary session is set by a Royal Decree, which precludes deputies from raising any issue outside the agenda. According to Al-Dustour, the extraordinary session will heighten the gap between legislators and the government.

Employment fund to inform job seekers on its work

AMMAN (Petra) — The Development and Employment Fund (DEF) Thursday will start visiting various governorates to present an outline of its activities to local job seekers and voluntary and charitable organisations, according to Mohammad Semadi, the DEF director general.

The programme will start in Irbid where DEF board members will explain the fund's objectives and methods of providing loans to those seeking to start a business, said Dr. Semadi.

Analyses by the DEF of available figures on unemployed Jordanians revealed that the majority live in the rural regions, and therefore, the fund will focus on the job seekers in those areas rather than in the cities, Dr. Semadi said.

Jordan supports ALO drive to promote small industries

CAIRO (Petra) — Jordan Wednesday voiced support for the Arab Labour Organisation's (ALO) drive to promote small industries and traditional handicrafts in the Arab World.

Addressing the 21st Arab Labour Organisation's conference here, Labour Minister Khaled Ghazawi said that Jordan backs a report by the Arab Labour Office which urged Arab states to open the door to small and light industries which serve as tributaries that enrich socio-economic development

The DEF also obtained a \$5 million loan from the European Union (EU); \$1 million of this loan will be spent on training heads of families in income-generating trades and the rest can be allotted in direct loans to job seekers starting their own businesses.

in the Arab World.

He called on the Arab Labour Office to establish a specialised department within the ALO to stimulate small size industries.

Representing Jordan at the head of a government, employers and workers delegation, Mr. Ghazawi said that in the past two years the Jordanian economy witnessed significant expansions in these industries, vertically and horizontally.

Small size industries in Jor-

dan have given momentum to the economy, created job opportunities and boosted industrial production, he said.

To help boost this industry, the minister said, the government created the Development Employment Fund (DEF) with a special budget to finance small size projects and help curtail the unemployment problem.

Mr. Ghazawi said Jordan would be ready to cooperate with the Arab Labour Office in promoting small size industries.

Balqez elected AACO chairman

AMMAN (J.T.) — Royal Jordanian President and Chief Executive Officer Mahmoud Jamal Balqez was elected chairman of the Arab Air Carriers Organisation (AACO) at a recent meeting of its general assembly in Manama.

Mr. Balqez urged Arab airlines to upgrade their cooperation and launch joint efforts to deal with new world air transport developments.

He said that he would call for a meeting of the heads of civil aviation authorities and chief executives of Arab air-

lines soon in order to draw up a pan-Arab air transport strategy to improve the Arab countries' air transport negotiating positions in dealings with European airlines.

The AACO general assembly will hold its next session in Amman in mid-1995, and it entrusted Mr. Balqez to launch steps towards implementing a new pan-Arab airlines strategy through the help of a committee comprising the directors general of the Moroccan, Egyptian, Lebanese and Kuwaiti airlines.



Mahmoud Jamal Balqez

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EUROPEAN FILM FESTIVAL

- Italian film entitled "Fratelli E Sorelle" (Brothers and Sisters) at the Royal Cultural Centre on Thursday at 5:00 p.m.
- Spanish film entitled "Los Santos Inocentes" (The Holy Innocents) at the Royal Cultural Centre on Thursday at 5:00 p.m.
- Spanish film entitled "Los Santos Inocentes" (The Holy Innocents) at the Royal Cultural Centre on Friday at 5:00 p.m.
- German film entitled "Abgeschminkt (Making Up)" at the Royal Cultural Centre on Friday at 8:00 p.m.

MUSICAL PERFORMANCES

- Musical performance by "Mirage" band at Prince Hassan Auditorium at the University of Jordan on Thursday and Friday at 5:30 p.m.

FUN FAIR

- First Annual Fun Fair at the Amman Baccalaureate School on Friday (10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.). Includes games for children, food concessions, and other activities. At 5:00 p.m. The Dead Sea Fish-Club Band will present a performance — proceeds to benefit the handicapped.

EXHIBITIONS

- The Jordanian Comprehensive Medical Fair '94 (displaying medical and drug industries, medical appliances, computer and X-Ray equipment, and dental equipment) at the Jordan Inter-Continental Hotel.
- Exhibition by Jordanian and Iraqi artists at the Italian Language Centre (9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.) (Tel. 669348).
- Exhibition of Zalloum foodstuff products at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- The Second International Stationery Exhibition at the World Exhibition Centre, University Road (Tel. 847113).
- Exhibition by Egyptian artist Shalabiya Ibrahim at Baladna Art Gallery (Tel. 678589).
- Exhibition of spring paintings by Dr. Ali Al Ghoul at Orfal Art Gallery (Tel. 826932).
- "Spring Exhibition 1994" at the Jordan Plastic Art Association Gallery (Tel. 699914).

- Exhibition by artist Perween Al Sarraf at Aba'ad Art Gallery (10:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.) (Tel. 819661).
- Exhibition by Iraqi artists Hayfa Habeeb and Farouk Hassan at Alia Art Gallery (10:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m., 3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.).
- Exhibition entitled "Return to Nature" at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- "The Amman-Baghdad exhibition" by Artist Ahmad Al Shaikhali at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- Ceramics exhibition by artist Isam Nseirat at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- Exhibition of Jordanian herbs at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- Flower exhibition entitled "The Flower Bridge Between Jordan and Palestine" at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabal Aman (10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.) (Tel. 679166).
- Art exhibition by artist Ahmed Nawar at Balqa' Art Gallery in Fuhais (daily from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.) (Tel. 720902).
- Jordanian-Iraqi contemporary exhibition by over 80 artists at Ain Art Gallery in Wadi Saqra (9:30 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.) (Tel. 644451).
- Exhibition of sculptures and drawings by Jordanian sculptor Samer Tabbaa. Also showing "permanent" exhibition of 54 Arab contemporary artists at Darat Al Funun of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabal Luweibdeh (Tel. 643251/2).
- Book exhibition at the Safeway International.

FILM

- Video film in English on artist Edgar Degas (part 1) (accompanying with commentary in Arabic by Dr. Khaled Khreis) at Darat Al Funun of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabal Luweibdeh on Thursday at 5:00 p.m.

DRAMA

- Comedy in Arabic entitled "The Guarantee" at the Royal Cultural Centre on Thursday at 8:00 p.m.

TRIP TO SALT

- Trip to Salt, organised by the Friends of Archaeology, includes a walking tour focusing on different architectural and archaeological sites (including the Toukan and Qaish houses). The next stop will be Jal'ad to see ruins from the Roman and Byzantine periods as well as an Umayyad mosque. Departure will be from the Amra Hotel parking lot on Friday at 9:00 a.m. in private cars.



Ceramics by Perween Al Sarraf

A mastery of diverse ceramics styles, forms

By Ian Atalla
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A high level of craftsmanship and a thorough mastery of a diverse range of ceramics styles and forms were evident at Iraqi artist Perween Al Sarraf's exhibition, on display at the Al Aba'ad Art Gallery in Amman.

Her mosaic patterns, wall plaques, diyscapes and pottery figures blend modern abstract styles with a broad panorama of Middle Eastern themes and motifs.

Although the craftsmanship Ms. Sarraf shows in some 60 artworks she has chosen to display at the studio is uniformly of high quality, there were some rough edges in the exhibit in terms of artistic content.

A few of her pieces, such as a trio of ovis, are more suitable as decorative craft items and not as pieces for display at an art gallery, where different merits apply. Displaying these pieces de-

tracted from some of her stronger, more fully-fledged art works.

Ms. Sarraf's work is commendable for its richness and sumptuousness of colour and hue, and a selection of pottery, and vase-like forms employing deep earth-brown tones with a black glaze are particularly striking.

Ms. Sarraf is currently the director of the ceramics section at the Young Muslim Women's Centre in Amman, and the display is being held under the patronage of the Young Women's Muslim Association Honorary President, Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath.

The Iraqi artist earned her diploma at the Institute of Arts and the Department of Ceramics at the Institute of Cultural Arts, both in Baghdad.

She has exhibited her works in Baghdad, Moscow, and Amman.

The current exhibition, which opened on Sunday April 3, will continue until April 14.

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(19/06 - 28/08)	Departure	Arrival
SUNDAY	05:15	07:10

AMMAN - ISTANBUL		
	Departure	Arrival
Monday, Friday	06:00	08:45

Amman Office: Jabal Amman, Third Circle.
Al Riyadh Centre, 8th Floor, Tel: (6) 659102/659112.

TURKISH AIRLINES
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Jordan Times

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Towards a strategy on Jerusalem

IN LESS than two weeks, the Muslim and Arab worlds will be celebrating the completion of restoration works on the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem. The significance of the occasion stems from the political implications it will have for the future of a city to which Muslims, Christians and Jews have looked with reverence for hundreds of years. The restoration work will help preserve the Islamic character of the Holy City against continuous Israeli attempts to bury it in oblivion.

Jordan will be marking the occasion with the importance it deserves. Hundreds of Arab Christian and Muslim intellectuals from all over the world will converge on Amman on April 18 to celebrate it. The committee entrusted with organising the celebration should view it as a prelude to the formulation of a comprehensive, thorough and intelligent strategy aimed at denying the Israelis the monopoly they have claimed on the city since they occupied it through force in 1967.

The committee should present the Arab and Muslim scholars and intellectuals with a rich agenda of activities geared towards tapping their knowledge and expertise for keeping alive Arab efforts to assert the Arab, Christian and Muslim identity of Jerusalem.

A strong articulation of the Arab rights in Jerusalem to the rest of the world should be a priority in light of the enormous propaganda Israel has been launching to distort the history of the Old City to serve its purposes. As Crown Prince Hassan said to the meeting of the General Islamic Congress on Jerusalem in Amman yesterday, the Arab media should do its share in projecting to the world the true story of Jerusalem. The Arab media and intellectuals should use the language of reason to convince the world of their rights in the city. No Israeli propaganda can erase the history of Muslim and Christian Arabs in Jerusalem. But there is much that we can do to present this history to the world, and gain its support.

On fundamental issues, the Arabs and Muslims cannot afford to be divided, said participants at the congress at the end of their three-day meeting. No issue in the Arab-Israeli conflict is as fundamental as that of Jerusalem. Peace will never prevail in the Middle East unless Arab, Muslim and Christian rights in Jerusalem are restored.

Jordan has always been in the forefront in defending the Arab identity of the Holy City. His Majesty King Hussein has spared no effort in working towards preserving the Arab rights in Jerusalem. Jordan has history to speak for its role in the Holy City. But Jordan and the Palestinians will need all the support they can get from the Arab and Muslim world to fight Israeli attempts to Judaize Jerusalem. The challenge is enormous. It is a task for all Arabs, Muslims and Christians.

Israel is reportedly planning to organise a Christian-Jewish celebration to mark what it claims to be the passage of 3,000 years since David built Jerusalem. These plans ring with alarm on two counts. First, it is yet another attempt by Israel to rewrite history in its favour since it ignores that the city was established by the Canaanite Arabs long before David. Second, because huge Israeli resources will be earmarked to use the event as a means of winning the sympathy of the world for its claims in the city.

The Arabs will not be short of historical evidence to refute these claims. Muslims and Christian Arabs have coexisted peacefully in the city for hundreds of years. Their roots in Jerusalem are dug too deep for Israel to abolish, for its modern and efficient propaganda machinery to bury with fabricated claims. Muslim and Arab countries have a responsibility to fight these plans. And with the facts of history behind them, it should not be difficult for them to convince the world of their rights in Jerusalem.

As Jordanian, Palestinian, Syrian and Lebanese negotiators try to regain their rights from Israel in Jerusalem and other occupied Arab territories through the peace talks, Muslim and Christian intellectuals should be fighting Israeli propaganda in the international arena. The fight for Jerusalem is one that should be launched on all fronts: diplomatic, political and intellectual. It is time enough resources were allocated on all of these fronts.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i daily Wednesday reminded the world of the urgent humanitarian services which Jordan accorded to the nearly one million evacuees from Iraq during the Gulf crisis and demanded fair treatment from the world community. The latest personality to praise Jordan for the services it offered to the evacuees was the head of the International Federation of the Red Crescent Societies. But praise for Jordan is not enough because the country is in need of an end to the injustice done to it and an end to international piracy practised against Aqaba-bound shipping, said Tareq Masarweh. Jordan's territory and airports were open to all international agencies which flew in and out of Jordan the people stranded in Jordan after the war. But the Kingdom was rewarded afterwards with a siege on its sole port, continued the writer. The one million evacuees did not go to Syria, Turkey or Iran but to Jordan, the safe haven where Jordanians were generous offering food and medical supplies and free transport, said the writer. He said perhaps it was a mistake for Jordan to be so sympathetic to others and help other nations since this humanitarian gesture has drawn the world community's disregard to Jordan's rights and national interests.

AL DUSTOUR Arabic daily commented on Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat's visit to Jordan which was designed to further bolster bilateral ties and maintain the highest level of coordination between the Palestinian and Jordanian leaderships with regard to the Middle East question. The visit is timely, coinciding with a critical stage when the Palestine issue is facing a turning point as the Palestinian people continue to face repression as Israel drags its feet over the implementation of U.N. Resolutions and other agreements, said the daily. It said there is no alternative for the two sides but to intensify their contacts and coordinate their steps as they face a common destiny and future and bolster the national unity between the Palestinians and Jordanians. The paper said that Jordan is in the forefront and is deeply concerned with the Palestine question and the Palestinian people's national interests and will help the Palestinians regain their rights. It said the joint efforts are bound to yield fruitful results, benefiting the Jordanian-Palestinian family.

Peace from a position of strength

By Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdoubeh

WITH DUE respect to the opinions of all those who think otherwise, I do not believe that we Arabs hold the weaker cards at the Arab-Israeli negotiating table, be it at the bilaterals, the multilaterals or the Gaza-Jericho negotiations.

The number of those among us who wish to persuade us, whether ill-advisedly or naively, that to enter into peace talks with Israel at this point in history is a grave mistake on our part (even though we have in fact entered into such talks is somewhat worrying. Such position is expressed by many journalists (especially in our Arabic dailies), political analysts, unionists, religious leaders, university professors and (less strongly) people from the various walks of life. The assumption held by most such individuals is that Arabs are either forced to engage in a process which we are not particularly qualified for or that we have, in the opinion of most radical forces deviated from the course of "resistance" and "struggle," whatever that means.

This attitude is both seriously flawed and unavoidably harmful. It is flawed for at least two reasons. First, those who do not see much value in peace negotiations between the Arab countries and Israel do so because, generally, they lack the vision for it. Such people are, quite simply, trapped in a historic era and a mentality which they are unable to transcend. Most of them belong to a defunct period, which some prefer to call (and somewhat justifiably, I think) the old world order, a world of cold wars, of military power, of dichotomised geography and of conflicting ideologies; a world in which we were at best intellectual dwarfs and ideological "bastards." To them, people are composed of winners and losers. You win a battle, you have your rights; you lose it, you lose all — a Darwinian vision in its most negative sense. Individuals with such horrid perspective, who are found as much in Israel as in the Arab World, cling to the past desperately because they do not know any better. They can never imagine how solutions can be reached without the exercise of prowess and the show of military might and the shedding of blood. In my view, these people miss the point on two counts. In peace, there are no winners and losers, for all are winners and all gain; the realities of the world are changing, or have in fact changed. More important than military power is economic power, industry and social development.

The biggest story of success in the 20th century is not the U.S. victory in the Gulf war but the triumph of Japanese technology, economy, work ethics and mind. The biggest story of failure is the fall of the Soviet Union.

Secondly, such line of thinking in the Arab World is part and parcel of the greater myth and lie, namely, that Zionism is absolutely mighty and invincible, that it is an "octopus" holding in its grip Western governments, economies, intellectual institutions, the mass media and the sympathy of the masses. This myth, which has been perpetuated by Israel itself in order to incapacitate the Arab World and hold it hostage to such grave misconception, has found its way among many of us faster than fire can spread in a largely because of ignorance. This is not to say that Israel does not have strong lobbies in the West. Far from it. It is to suggest, that we exaggerate Israel's strength and our own weakness. It is a big mistake to either feel impotent or be tricked by Israel's outrageous statements and declarations, as many of us do.

There are many among us who read Israeli political discourse only superficially. When Israel says no to the

dismantling of the settlements, to withdrawal from Jerusalem; or to recognition of the Palestinian state, they take it as a no, not as a negotiating tactic. Israel can say what it likes, but when it comes down to serious business, it must compromise, be flexible and turn the no's into yes's. Its words are neither written in gold nor engraved in marble. For the sake of peace there must be give and take.

The attitude is also harmful (as stated above) because it weakens the position of the Arab negotiator. If some of us continue to play their repetitious, monotonous and immensely boring song about the futility of the peace process, the gullibility of the Arab diplomat, the absurdity of talking to Israel, and the uselessness of attempting to change present-day realities through civilised dialogue, they will do us and our negotiators and politicians a great disservice. Many of our journalists, writers, political analysts, poets, novelists, economists and intellectuals are participating only subversively and negatively. This is a shame, for what we need from them is not a destructive but a constructive perspective. Our diplomat and our negotiator are in need of their assistance. To be cynical is easy, to be an asset is more difficult.

The peace process will undoubtedly benefit from an informed opinion, a specific fact here and there, a profound comment, a sound advice and an appropriate critical remark. We want our historians to bring history to bear on the negotiating process, our economists to bring economy to bear on them too. This is not happening much, for the majority is either silent or loud and obnoxious.

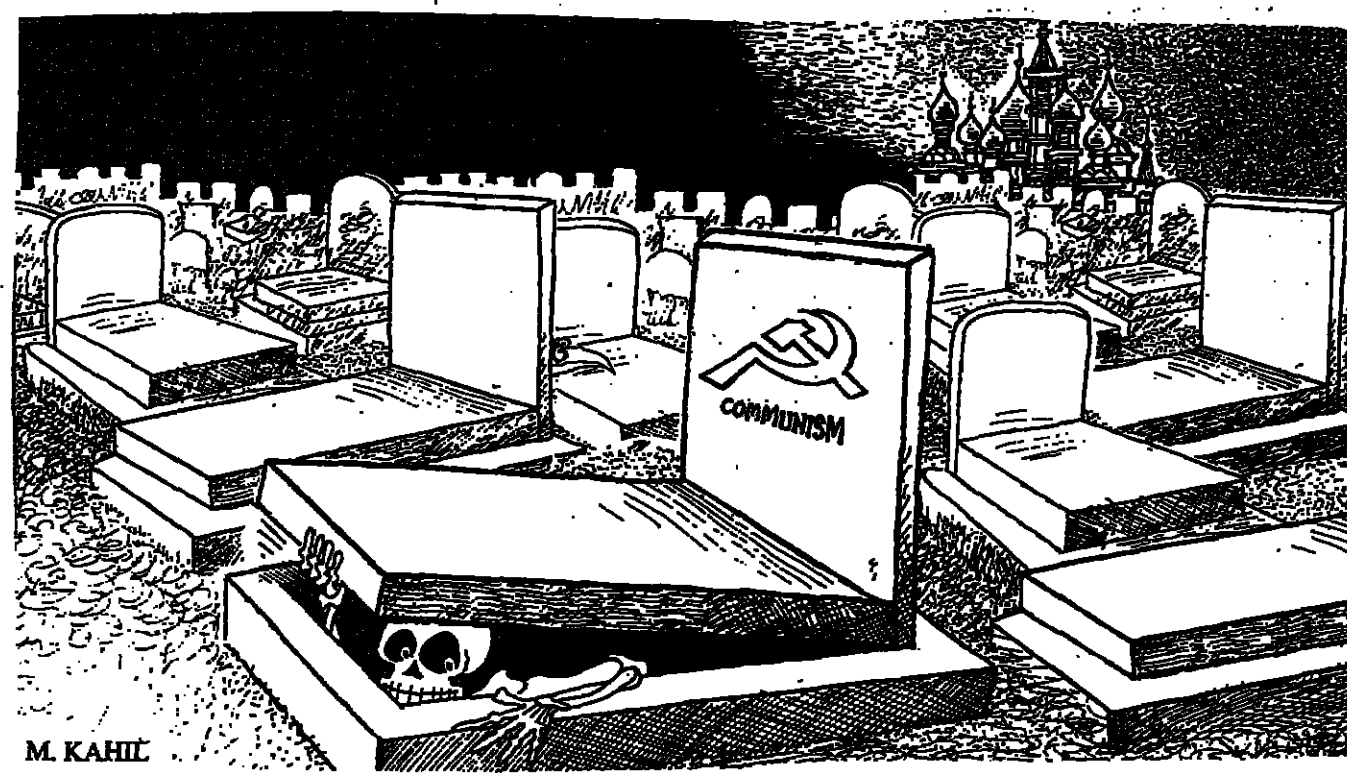
We negotiate from a position of strength. We ought to know this, and Israel ought to know it. We hold so many cards in our hands, and we have so much to offer Israel. Through its racist, colonialist, imperialist, oppressive and violent policies Israel has alienated itself from all the essentially friendly countries in the region. Through its arrogance, intransigence and unwillingness to give us back our territories which it occupied by force, Israel has locked itself up in a prison which it itself erected. How long can Israel live in such self-imposed isolation? How long can it continue to antagonise its neighbours? In exchange for the land it took by force, Israel can win its true freedom and contribute to peace. It can take part and enjoy the benefits of a happy Middle East. This is a card which we hold in our hands.

Can you imagine Israel achieving prosperity and happiness without the acceptance and assistance of its neighbours? How long can Israel rely on Western aid and charity? How can its economy grow if it does not interact with its neighbours? This is another card we hold in our hands.

How can Israel have peace when it is committing a great deal of injustice in the occupied territories? How can it have peace of mind when there is an intifada? This is another card we have in our hands. Since the 1980's, in particular, we have had the sympathy of the whole world. Since the very beginning of the conflict we have had international law on our side. And so on and so forth.

I am not saying the peace process will be all milk and honey. I am not saying we will get through it all we want. What I am saying is the following: Peace is an opportunity for us and for everyone in the region. We need to give it our best shot, and we need to change much of our attitude towards it. We are going to the negotiating table anyway; let's go with knowledge, faith and determination.

The writer is a professor of American literature at Yarmouk University.



Yeltsin foes already campaigning for presidency

By Anatoly Verbin

Reuter

MOSCOW — Russia's next presidential election is still officially more than two years away. But for President Boris Yeltsin's two fiercest rivals, the presidential campaign has already begun.

Election rules have yet to be drawn up. Polls have not been called. Indeed, under the current constitution, they are not due until June 1996.

But extreme nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy and former vice-president Alexander Rutskoi, ignoring Mr. Yeltsin's calls for a political time-out, have begun the race already.

Mr. Zhirinovskiy was made official candidate by his Liberal Democratic Party (LDPR) over the weekend. Mr. Rutskoi is clearly positioning himself to stand, though he is yet to announce it.

With Mr. Yeltsin himself keeping his powder dry, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin constrained by his office, and radical reformers still in disarray after their electoral defeat in December, opposition figures have the field to themselves.

Mr. Zhirinovskiy won dictatorial powers at an LDPR congress this weekend, saying they were needed "to form a one-party government and win the top post in the country."

The erratic nationalist

promised to restore the Russian empire, threatened to dissolve the United Nations, accused the West of waging a bloodless world war three against Russia and, unusually, targeted Mr. Yeltsin personally.

He also hosted a congress of Slav peoples attended by a dozen delegations from fringe nationalist parties, most of them from Serbia, to announce:

"Let the West start worrying from April 3, the day when the Slavs started uniting, forming common state, political and maybe even military bodies."

Mr. Rutskoi was scarcely less militant. This week he took part in a procession of hardline Communists, nationalists and neo-Fascists of the Russian National Unity Grouping (RNE) to commemorate those killed last October when government troops and tanks crushed an armed uprising against Mr. Yeltsin.

Mr. Rutskoi led the uprising, in which officially 147 people were killed, from the old parliament headquarters, the White House. When it was crushed, he was taken to jail and charged with organising mass disturbances.

He was arrested by parliament in February in what it called a conciliatory move but has shown no sign of repenting his call for armed militants to storm the Mos-

cow television centre and mayor's office, the actions which sparked off the uprising.

"No less than 500 people have been killed in the White House," Mr. Rutskoi said. "It is not RNE who are Fascists. It is those who opened fire on the White House."

While avoiding Mr. Rutskoi's headline rhetoric, moderate Communists in parliament are also hostile to Mr. Yeltsin's idea of a political truce up to the presidential polls in 1996.

Communist leader Gennady Zyuganov made clear at a news conference last week that his party still does not accept the new constitution, passed in a referendum in December, and wants to amend it.

He also suggested that the presidential elections be brought forward. Mr. Yeltsin, now 63, was elected in June 1991 for a five-year term.

Mr. Yeltsin's vagueness on whether he will stand himself, topped by continuing media reports of his failing health, vehemently denied by his aides and family, lead the opposition to view him as a lame duck.

Liberal reformers, shattered by their loss in December parliamentary elections and unable, at least for now, to overcome internal splits, do not seem in a position to

put forward a strong candidate.

Free marketer Yegor Gaidar has announced plans to create a party. Russian television responded in a sad comment: "The party cannot have mass following because he (Mr. Gaidar) is too honest and too clever."

That leaves Mr. Rutskoi himself and the centrist Chernomyrdin, though both are so far avoiding any firm commitments.

Mr. Yeltsin's message is that if there was a candidate whom he could trust and who was likely to win, the Russian leader would consider his historic task completed.

"For me, it is not a question of staying or leaving. It is a question of leaving Russia in safe and democratic hands," he said in a recent interview in the Spanish daily El Pais.

"These hands will have to be capable of holding the Russian rudder steady in heavy seas."

At the moment those hands seem most likely to be Mr. Chernomyrdin's. Since becoming prime minister in late 1992 Mr. Chernomyrdin has emerged as undisputable number two in Russia.

He has never wavered publicly in his loyalty to Mr. Yeltsin and maintains it is immoral to speak about his own presidential ambitions while the current incumbent is still in place.

China's move against dissident shows power of ideas

By David Schlesinger
Reuter

BEIJING — China's latest move against its most prominent dissident shows Wei Jingsheng's potency as a symbol of democratic pressures.

The official Xinhua news agency this week published a police statement saying Mr. Wei was being detained and interrogated "because he violated the law on many occasions and is suspected of having committed new crimes when he was deprived of his political rights and on parole."

Mr. Wei was released in September after serving nearly 15 years in prison. His renewed detention is sure to rekindle debate in the United States about whether human rights concerns should stand in the way of normal trade between Beijing and Washington.

In less than two months, U.S. President Bill Clinton must decide whether to renew China's Most Favoured Nation (MFN) trading privileges, something he has said he will do only if it makes progress on rights.

Chinese officials did not specify the new charges against Mr. Wei. But the timing of the hard-line statement shows how dangerous the Communist Party feels Mr. Wei has become.

He has been a focal point of Beijing's small and scattered dissident community since his release.

"They have found it very difficult to handle Mr. Wei Jingsheng," a Western diplomat said. "They had two options: Let him go on, which has domestic consequences, or stop him, which has international consequences."

"They've showed that no matter what, they're not going to have dissent at any cost."

Mr. Wei is a self-taught political philosopher who has been a challenge to the Communist Party since the late 1970s.

His most famous work, written at the height of the short-lived "Democracy Wall" movement in 1978, was a tract entitled "The fifth modernisation — democracy."

This demanded that the Chinese people be given a voice in their future. This right, said Mr. Wei, was as important as the government-approved four modernisa-

tions for industry, agriculture, technology and the armed forces.

"People should have democracy. If they ask for democracy, they are only asking for something they rightfully own. Anyone refusing to give them democracy is a shameless bandit no better than a capitalist who robs workers of their money earned with their sweat and blood," the article said.

Mr. Wei's long years of imprisonment have clearly not changed his ideas at all. This leaves him directly at odds with a Communist Party so determined to maintain political control that only five years ago it ordered a bloody army crackdown on student-led pro-democracy protests in Tiananmen Square.

In one recent article, written for Hong Kong's Eastern Express newspaper, Mr. Wei warned businessmen against sacrificing democratic principles in their rush to make money off the China market, an argument which cuts to the heart of the MFN debate.

"The potential of China's vast market is very seductive," he wrote.

"But if investors fail to invest in helping the rational forces of democratic reform and instead leave China's fate in the hands of reactionary autocrats or other unpredictable elements, then this is not merely harmful to the interests of the Chinese people."

"It is also harmful to the interests of the businessmen who have invested in the China market themselves."

His words directly contradicted Chinese leaders who have worked hard to get American businesses to lobby the Clinton administration to remove the link between human rights and trade.

Businessmen and economists have warned of serious economic consequences, for both sides if the rights row ruptures trade ties.

A commentary in this week's official Outlook weekly praised business leaders who took China's side and dismissed as know-nothing idealists those who tried to get human rights progress through trade pressure.

"Their ignorance of China and the world situation is extreme," the magazine's commentator wrote. "They still grasp on to the outdated weapons of the 'carrot' and the 'stick'."

"But we believe that reality is the best teacher and will sooner or later bring these idealists around."

LETTERS

Foreign channel misnamed?

To the Editor:

RECENTLY I read in the Jordan Times that Jordan Television (JTV) is going to start airing yet another Arabic series which will be subtitled in English. I felt we viewers might be headed for trouble when I heard a commentator on Radio Jordan saying how a wonderful, brilliant series "End of a Brave Man" was and how well it was accepted. Who loved the series and accepted it? Nobody I know. Did anyone do research into who watched and who didn't? As far as accepting goes, I accept that Ramadan is a time of self-sacrifice (for Muslims and non-Muslims alike), and I considered that the series was shown on television as part of sacrifice for most viewers. After trying very hard to watch the series, I found it uninteresting, overdone, and of student film-maker quality (it might have been made into a one or one-and-a-half hour movie but not a nightly series for one month). Also, the subtitles were very poorly done (poor timing, wrong spelling, letters left out, and poor English usage).

In addition to airing more uninteresting Arabic series subtitled in English, Jordan Television has chosen to air two weeks of African Football on prime time. Most foreigners who live in Jordan are women married to Jordanians. Nearly every woman I know dislikes sports. (Most are of U.S. nationality and hate football, in general.)

Also, I've noticed that some of the best, most well-loved programmes are being shown at 11:30 p.m. or 12:00 p.m., which is bedtime for most people. Is this further sensitivity and decline?

What is going on at Jordan Television? Is this the beginning of the end of the foreign channel? Should it be renamed Arabic channel 2? After all, virtually all foreign programmes don't choose to watch the Arabic channel.

Up until now, I always felt a sense of pride in the JTV foreign channel. The programming was always of very high quality. I feel I speak for many viewers when I ask JTV to rethink these decisions. We are looking to your wise decisions to be entertained, informed and enlightened (not to be bored to death).

Mrs. G. Woodward,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Exhibition leaves deep impression on art society

By Mohammad Mashariqa

An exhibition of paintings, entitled *Writers... Painters*, has just come to a close at the Royal Cultural Centre in Amman without much fanfare.

The visitors were a limited group of artists and writers



Ibrahim Nasrallah's paintings present a mood of mystery

who examined a new phenomenon in art work by writers, poets and novelists-turned artists.

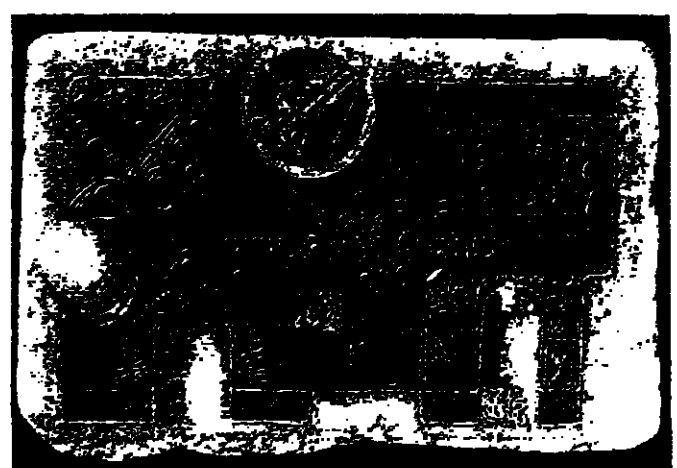
Indeed, painting is a sudden and unexpected talent displayed by Jamal Naji, Farouq Wadi and Ibrahim Nasrallah. The visitors were spell bound by the excellent and high quality pieces of artwork which placed these writers in the forefront among the list of modern Jordanian artists.

Asked to assess his own talent as painter after excelling as a novelist and a poet, Jamal Naji said: "In painting, I am haunted by the characters of my novels. I imagine their features and situations and try to depict them in my painting."

"I have learnt through writing that a play or a novel would not be complete without putting in all the details, and this is exactly what I am experiencing and applying in painting, though the tools in this art are different," added Naji.

He said he had actually painted the characters of his novels. "The smallest details missed in writing are being embodied in the painting."

Naji, a bank employee in Jordan, has written six novels and a number of short stories. He is rightly considered one of the notable novelists of Jordan who tackle social and



One of the paintings by Farouq Wadi

political issues. His latest novel, about life and death, featured the critical situation in Jordan in the late 1980s when the Jordanian society was deeply shaken by a violent economic crisis that resulted in a deep deterioration in the Jordanian people's standard of living.

In Naji's view a novelist/painter has more potential in depicting the details of a novel's character. Naji opted for the abstract expression in his paintings but at the same time he was scrupulous in reflecting minute details of the subject of his drawing.

Novelist/poet Ibrahim Nasrallah considers painting as a tool to express his views, "not so much different from writing except in form."

He says: "In painting I can express hidden and hitherto undiscovered talents in myself and in painting I try to acquire and express my desire to achieve a miracle."

In his view, poetry and novel writing are interwoven in artistic work with painting because they are both an expression of the talent.

AMMAN CULTURAL PULSE

Nasrallah says painting has the power of attracting the viewer though it does not possess as much power as the poem or the novel in impressing readers.

Nasrallah's paintings present a mood of mystery and concealment expressed in the strange characters and subjects. He resorts to colours to express his ideas.

Nasrallah has published eight collections of his poetry and four novels, one of which was translated into English.

Farouq Wadi, the third writer/painter, adopts a different method and different tools to present his works of art. He avoids abstract art in his paintings which depict oriental architecture.

Wadi says: "Since the Arab defeat in June 1967, I have not been able to touch my brush and deal with the colours, neither was I able to deal with or resort to armed struggle or to tackle the issue of class struggle. I have dedicated my past work to writing. But in recent years I felt that I have the need to express views in a different manner and hence, my decision to revert to my past interest, that is painting."



A painting by Jamal Naji

which I had abandoned for 25 years." Wadi has published a collection of novels and a book on literary criticism.

The exhibition *Writers... Painters* could be described as one of the main art exhibitions that have left deep impression on the art society in the country.

Lack of strong civil society impedes democracy in Arab World

The Arab World After Desert Storm

By Mohammad Faour
Published by the United States Institute of Peace Press, 176 pages

WASHINGTON — "There seems little chance for Western democracy to develop and prosper in the Arab World, at least in the short run," according to Mohammad Faour, author of *The Arab World After Desert Storm*. Although the Gulf War increased popular demands for democracy and raised Western expectations to high levels, it did not significantly reduce several major obstacles to the development of democracy:

— Most Arab countries lack a strong civil society — a network of independent voluntary associations such as labour unions that mediate between the government and the people — which is a hallmark of established democracies.

— Some Arab regimes continue to exert increasing control over their citizens' daily lives by using the army, the police force, and civil security agencies to control or suppress dissent.

— The governing elites are cohesive groups, often based on family or class ties, and political leadership has traditionally been "personal, authoritarian, patrimonial, and patriarchal." Also, communal and sectarian bonds, which generally work against national unity, remain strong.

— The governments themselves are by far the largest economic actors in each country, giving them another effective measure of control.

— And, finally, powerful democracies such as the United States have failed to exert "continuous, strong external support for democracy," in the Arab World.

In *The Arab World After Desert Storm*, Faour examines the Middle East in the wake of the Gulf War and speculates on changes that may occur in the next few years. The book details post-war developments in six key countries — Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

According to Faour, the human costs of the war were "appalling." Given the large number of Arab expatri-

ates from poorer countries working in the oil-producing countries, the war triggered a chain of events with enormous impact throughout the Middle East:

— Roughly 350,000 Palestinians were displaced from Kuwait. Most of them ended up in Jordan, causing tremendous economic disruption.

— Saudi Arabia expelled close to one million Yemeni workers. Most of these workers returned to Yemen, depriving and already weak economy of \$1.5 billion in workers' remittances through April 1991 (and more thereafter).

— Roughly 800,000 Egyptian farmers and skilled workers in Iraq returned to Egypt. Subsequently, almost one million Egyptians sought work in Saudi Arabia, replacing the expelled Yemenis.

"The tendency... within some Western circles to ascribe to the war all sorts of beneficial effects must be corrected; in the Arab World at least, the war has created more problems than it has solved."

— Nearly 1.8 million Iraqis, mostly Kurds, were displaced within their own country. In addition, Faour estimates that over 100,000 Iraqis died as a result of the war and its aftereffects, and that 1.4 million Iraqis sought refuge in Iran.

Faour also cites the enormous economic costs of the conflict. War-related costs in Kuwait amounted to more than \$80 billion, not including the price of restoring the shattered environment. For Saudi Arabia, costs associated with conducting the war and related economic losses were at least \$60 billion. Jordan lost \$500 million in annual aid from the Gulf states and \$400 million in

BOOK REVIEW

annual remittances from Jordanians previously employed in Kuwait.

The war also dramatically underscored the gradual decline of pan-Arabism in favour of territorial nationalism and the concurrent rise of Islamism (sometimes referred to as "political Islam" or "Islamic fundamentalism") in the Arab World. Faour predicts that although "the outcome of the struggle for power between the Islamists and... the ruling elites is far from certain," the influence of the Islamists in Egypt will probably grow and in Algeria they will "continue to be a powerful political force... dominated by radical, militant elements." In Jordan, on the other hand, the Islamists and King Hussein have developed a working relationship, that, while not without tensions, will continue to provide Islamists with some influence on Jordanian politics.

Faour expresses optimism about greater Arab flexibility regarding the Arab-Israeli peace process. Arab states, he argues, now realise that "maintaining the present status quo is truly more dangerous than a potential negotiated compromise," (as evidenced by the agreement between the Palestine Liberation Organisation and Israel). The Gulf War contributed to this more realistic point of view by destroying Iraq's military superiority; exacerbating domestic economic, political and social problems in key Arab countries; and dispelling the myths that the Arab states could achieve military parity with Israel and that Arab solidarity would surface when one or more Arab countries was fighting a non-Arab power.

Faour also analyses how intraregional relations have changed in the aftermath of the war. He concludes that since the end of the Gulf War, inter-Arab politics continues to be heavily influenced by each nation's wartime position (in support of the international coalition against Iraq or not) and that politics have become "atomised," with each state "explicitly placing its

domestic interests before regional or subregional interests." This fractured "new Arab order" includes many elements:

— The economic split between the "haves" (the Gulf states) and the "have-nots" (Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Syria and the Palestinians) continues.

— A number of Arab states have become more dependent on the support of countries outside the region, such as the United States, Britain and France. Kuwait, for example, has reached bilateral security accords with all three countries.

— Several longstanding disputes between Arab states have become more active. For example, the border disputes between Saudi Arabia and Yemen and between Bahrain and Qatar have flared in recent months.

Operation Desert Storm was "the equivalent of an enormous earthquake that has rearranged various features of the Arab landscape, and the aftershocks of which are rumbling still throughout the region."

— Regional international organisations such as the Arab League, the Arab Maghreb Union, the Arab Cooperation Council, and the Gulf Cooperation Council have failed to forge common positions.

— The roles of Egypt and Saudi Arabia as regional powers have declined. Indeed, Saudi Arabia, "which previously mediated inter-Arab conflicts, has now become a party to regional conflicts," straining its relations with Iraq, Jordan and Yemen.

— Syria's importance in regional politics has grown, since it is "the only Arab power that constitutes a military threat to Israel." — U.S. Institute of Peace.

American matador fought bulls, prejudice

By Richard Bastin
Reuters

SEVILLE, Spain — The only living North American to have fought his way to the top in Spanish bullfighting is ready to hang up his cape after nearly 40 years of facing one of the world's most dangerous animals.

But John Fulton says that the most difficult thing he has had to deal with is not the bulls, but the prejudice of the Spanish bullfighting establishment.

Fulton, 61, who made his last stand in Mexico on April 2, has struggled throughout his career to break into the close-knit circles that dominate the bullfight or "corrida".

He is not alone. The

problems faced by aspiring "toreros" are notorious in Spain, especially for foreigners.

Colombian matador Cesar Rincon had enormous trouble getting fights in Spain when he arrived, even though he was a star in his own country. He kept fighting brilliantly and eventually could not be ignored.

Fulton's own entrance into the surreal and romantic world of bullfighting began when he saw the film version of Blasco Ibanez's novel *Blood And Sand* about the rise and fall of one young Sevilliano hopeful.

"It's still a marvellous movie, but when I was 12 it really impressed me. I knew then that one way or

another I had to become a bullfighter and live in Seville," Fulton said.

He first was introduced to Spain through exiled Spaniards in his native Philadelphia. One was a retired matador, who taught him some moves with the sheet he used in his barber's shop.

Eager to pursue his bullfighting interest, Fulton won a scholarship to study painting in Mexico, and it was there that he first stood in front of a bull.

"Even when you have seen them side-on, they never seem as big as they do up front," he said. A four-year-old fighting bull stands at least 1.5 metres (five feet) tall and weighs more than 500 kilos (1,100 lb).

After doing the rounds of

the Mexican "novillero" or novice circuits, Fulton decided to come to Seville, where the Maestranza Ring is the unofficial capital of world bullfighting.

He arrived in 1955 with \$400 in his pocket, an American name and Mexican experience.

It took him eight years of struggle to make it to the top level, but even then things were not easy. He found it difficult to get signed up for fights because of his nationality.

"It was all too much for them, it challenged their self-respect and their preconceptions," Fulton said.

Shortly after becoming a fully-tiedged bullfighter, he killed a bull from the legendary Miura farm as the only

success of an afternoon featuring six of the country's top matadors.

But the impresarios and critics were still not interested.

"You got the feeling that some of them saw 'American matador' on the posters and wrote their articles in advance," Fulton said.

Despite its politics of exclusion, Fulton loves bullfighting and is nostalgic for the days when toreros took bigger risks and the bulls were stronger and more powerful.

"There was real danger and real excitement — what it's all about. What we have nowadays is decaffeinated bullfighting. Rincon is one of the few guys who really gets out there and puts him-

self on the line by getting close to the bull," Mr. Fulton said.

The corrida as an art form — its aficionados insist it is not sport — is in a state of crisis as it struggles to re-define itself in modern day society and fend off criticism from animal rights groups.

"I really don't believe the bull suffers too much, there's so much adrenalin involved that neither the animal nor the matador tend to notice the pain," Fulton said.

To support his first love, Fulton was forced to look for other sources of income. He developed his painting skills and eventually opened his own gallery in Seville, which features his personal

cave painting-style pictures in bull's blood.

He has also recently finished illustrating a new book by American author James Michener, who met Fulton while writing *Iberia* in the 1960's.

Fulton's studio walls portray his life as an expatriate living in Seville. There is a picture of him and actor Peter O'Toole in matador costumes during the filming of *Lawrence Of Arabia*.

Alongside is a photocopy of a cheque payable to Fulton signed by a bullfighting aficionado named Ernest Hemingway.

There is a photo of Fulton and bullfighting legend Juan Belmonte. He was with Belmonte in 1961 when they were told that

Hemingway had committed suicide.

Belmonte said of Hemingway: "He did what he had to." A year later Belmonte killed himself.

Fulton fought his last bull in the picturesque Mexican town of San Miguel De Allende where he made his first kill nearly 40 years ago. He sports a pony-tail in anticipation of the traditional retirement ceremony where a fellow torero will lop it off and mark the end of Fulton's days in the ring.

If he were to start again, he said he would change his name to something Spanish. "They'd have no excuse but to recognise me for who I am. Perhaps I'd call myself Juan Gallardo" — the bullfighter in *Blood And Sand*.

How does it work?

By Jean-Claude Elias

Thanks to attractive, easy to read personal computer (PC) magazines, to more than a decade of inherited computer awareness and to countless sleepless nights spent before PC monitors, the average PC user in 1994 knows a lot about computers and data processing.

Megabytes — million bytes or characters —, megahertz (one of the units used to measure a computer's speed), MIPS (Mega Instructions Per Second) have no more secrets for PC operators. Even teenagers will tell you everything you wanted to know (but never dared to ask) about the different components of a PC-based system: keyboard, monitor, disks, central memory, multi-media, laser discs, etc...

As valuable as it can be, such a level of knowledge is called "basic" by computer professionals. I would even add to it the term "commercial" for it is the kind that allows people to choose and buy the PC they need.

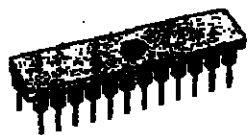
Beyond the layman's knowledge and the commercial level, beyond even the standard level of professional analysts, programmers and electronic engineers, is a world, unknown to most of us — the world of VLSI — Very Large Scale Integration.

We know that data is recorded on a hard disk, displayed on the monitor and printed on hard copy. We can even explain how software works, how data processing gives us perfectly prepared documents and how databases let us "crunch" information. But do we know exactly how the computer does all this internally? How does it keep all these megabytes in memory? How can it calculate, compare, sort, retrieve and store information?

Processing is possible thanks to the microchips, these tiny black silicon wafers found on electronic boards which remind us of the building blocks in a Monopoly game. Without them there would be no computing. At least not as we have come to know it.

Sophisticated manufacturing techniques allow engineers to squeeze, on a single chip, mind boggling amounts of data. Some chips are designed to store information while others perform the actual processing (calculations, comparisons, etc...). All those who study

chip talk



digital electronics are perfectly aware of the theories involved in designing microchips. In other words, specialists do know about the principles of microchips manufacturing, but what remains a well preserved secret is the actual manufacturing process.

Simply put, all complicated circuits are laid on large scale drawings, large enough for the human eye to perceive and work on. Once the final stage is reached, the drawings are photographed, reduced to a much smaller scale and transferred to the silicon wafer through special ultra-violet "printing" techniques. It is precisely the reduction and transfer techniques that are the trade secrets of chips manufacturers like Intel, Motorola, Texas Instruments and others.

The chips' design, even on a human scale, is already a prowess in itself, but the reduction and manufacturing techniques are almost unbelievable. Currently, four million characters can be stored on half of a square inch area memory chip and microprocessors weighing a few grams and having a one square inch area can process 50 million instructions per second. Only a few lucky specialists in the world know exactly how this is achieved, from the manufacturing point of view. VLSI is definitely not a hobby to practice at home.

Once the limit of the matter itself (silicon or other) are reached, down to the atomic level, computer designers will start relying on parallel processing (already commercially available) whereby several processors work in parallel, at the same time, each being assigned a specific task. Nobody can even foresee the limits of parallel processing.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

By Mohammad A. Shuqair

BELIEVE IT OR NOT

- The coldest region in the world is Washington Mountain in New Hampshire where temperature never exceeds 2 degrees below zero all the year round and that the thickness of snows falling on it approximately reaches 7 metres.
- One of the nobility in England held a funeral for his tame parrot on the occasion of the bird's death. The gentleman placed the parrot in a coffin surrounded by a thousand lilies. He also adorned the parrot's bill with a diamond ring.
- The law in the American city of Memphis prohibits frog croaking after 11:00 p.m.
- An American covered his car with hundreds of pennies made of brass. He himself wears a suit made of 3,568 pennies weighing about 10 kg.

LET'S LEARN ARABIC

- Don't be silly. La takon ahmak.
- Don't be against me. La takon did'dee.
- Don't be shy. La takon khajoolan.
- Don't be late tomorrow. La tata'akhar ghadan.
- Don't get nervous. La takon assahyan.
- Don't do it again. La tamar'ha marrahan thaniya.
- Never be in a hurry. La tata'afjal.
- Never be a backbiter. La takon maghtaban.
- Never be so hangry. La takon mutakabbiran.
- Never be a parasite. La takon tofoofyan.
- Never be hard-hearted. La takon kasil-kalb.

YOUR MEDICAL GUIDE

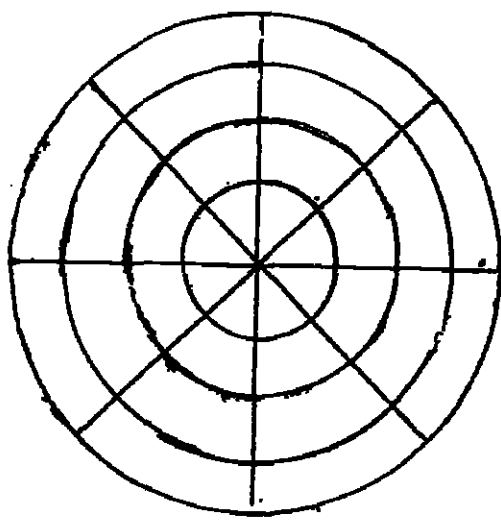
UNDESCENDED TESTICLE

The testicle, or male sex organ, normally lies within the abdominal cavity before birth. By the time the male baby is born, however, it should have moved down to occupy its proper position within a special sac of skin, the scrotum. Sometimes one or both of the organs may fail to do this, and the condition is then known as an undescended testicle. Unless the testicle occupies its normal position it cannot function properly. Sometimes it can be made to descend by means of glandular treatment, but often a small operation is necessary in order to bring it down.

LAUGHTER

- BRIDEGROOM: I see the house is full of flies. Could you tell me why, my sweet-heart?
- BRIDE: Oh, that's such an easy question to answer. Don't you know we are enjoying our honeymoon nowadays?!
- CUSTOMER: How much is a kilo of grapes?
- FRUIT-SELLER: Fifty piastres a cluster, separated thirty.
- CUSTOMER: OK. I want two kilos separated from those clusters, please!

- WIFE: There's a thief on the floor.
- HUSBAND: (Amazed) How did he come? I can't believe it.



- HOLIDAY: You will have to work hard but your efforts will be productive if you dreamt of a holiday.
- FOOTSTEPS: If you heard footsteps in your room, you can expect to learn something to your great advantage.

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

- (1) What is a Basque and what is a basque?
- (2) Why is the saxophone so-called?
- (3) Who was Pluto and what is a plutocracy?
- (4) If you leave the lid off the saucepan, will the soup get more, or less, salty?
- (5) Who was Stavisky and who was Stravinsky?

PUZZLES

1. Which are there more of: seconds in a week or feet in 100 miles?
2. Using the digits 1 to 9, and just one mathematical 'sign', make an expression exactly equal to 100.
3. Dotto: Can you place eight dots on the diagram below in such a way that there are two dots on each straight line and two dots on each circle?

Living gold

By E. Yaghi

Hani was a quilt maker who lived in a small village somewhere in the Jordan Valley. When young, he spent a great deal of his free time with his best friend Elias. Together, on warm days, they would go out into the fields and sit and discuss life, religion and the future. The worst thing about Hani was that he could see no faults in his friend who remained his ideal until one day some money was stolen from Elias's house. It was then Elias signed a complaint that he suspected Hani, for as he stated, "he was the only one who knew where I hid my money."

Try as he would to no avail, Hani protested the accusations and asserted his innocence, but no one believed him, not even his fiancée. He was detained in a local prison during investigations of the reported theft. No evidence was found against him, so the police soon released him. It was early evening in spring, when Hani walked out of jail free, but though he had been behind bars, he felt freer when he was imprisoned. Slowly, he trudged home in the still of the night where the only sound he could hear was the whoop of an owl and some crickets squeaking in wee voices. He could only think of his friend's double betrayal and his fiancée's breaking off their engagement. Once home, he lit an oil lamp and sat alone into the small hours of the night thinking hard about all that had happened.

For days he refused to step outside his door and sweated while sleeping, waking up in the middle of the night screaming: "No, I didn't steal anything. I'm innocent!"

He suddenly jumped up when he saw the stern countenance of his friend Elias in his nightmare and then paced back and forth in his cottage asking himself, "why me? Why me? I trusted Elias. He was my idol!" He decided the only face saving thing he could do would be to move to another village. He gathered his equipment, which wasn't much for a quilt maker, paid his rent and left without telling a soul one word of good-bye. To further his confusion about friendship, he was told that Elias planned to marry his former fiancée.

After he settled in a different village, he shunned his faith and fellow man, and kept much to himself except when someone wanted him to make a new quilt or refurbish an old one. At times, he felt like visiting his brother living in Amman, but at other moments shutting out the world seemed better. He continued his trade for several years having as little contact with others as possible. Since there was no one to spend his money on and he cared little for the extravagances of life, he saved his earnings and exchanged them for gold. At last, his greatest pleasure became his treasure and every night after he finished working, he would take out his gold and spend hours nearly worshipping it. Then he returned it to his leather bag and hid it on his closet shelf. One day, when he went to the village to buy some

more wool for his quilts, a scavenger raided his home, turning it upside down until at last he found and confiscated the leather bag and its contents. He stuffed the gold pieces in his pockets, threw the bag on the floor, and rushed out of Hani's house and the village forever.

When Hani returned home, he discovered his empty leather bag, trampled on the floor, covered with dirt. With disbelief, he slowly picked it up, turned it upside down and shook it even though he knew it empty. He slumped down on his bed, sunk his head in his hands and cried, "this is the second time I have been betrayed by other human beings and now I have lost the only thing that was dear to me!"

For two weeks, he stopped making quilts and after alerting his neighbours and the village, of the theft, he secluded himself in his home, making it a veritable prison. Yet, the reaction of the people about him stunned him. They seemed concerned, yet their sympathy hardly touched his hardened heart. Then one day, at the beginning of summer, a man from Amman knocked on his door. In his arms he carried a small child with golden curly hair. Hani opened the door and stared at the child with a dirty face and large brown eyes, wide and wondering, looking back at him. The man said: "I'm sorry to bother you, sir, but I'm a friend of your brother's. He told me that if anything ever happened to him to deliver his only child to you. A week ago, your brother and his wife were killed in a car accident. The baby survived and you are the next of kin and the only one who can take care of the child. I've been searching for you for days."

Hani didn't know what to be more shocked about, his brother's death or the sudden responsibility of this young life thrust in his arms. The bundle cuddled next to him. He felt another heart beating beside his own in a warm body. All he could say to the stranger who brought the baby was, "what is its name?"

"His name is Yahya. Good day sir and forgive me for having to inform you of your brother's death in this manner."

Hani looked down at the small form and exclaimed, "I've found some living gold to replace the gold I lost!" It was little Yahya who taught Hani to rediscover the world again and to have faith once more in his fellow man. He raised the boy to grow into a dedicated adult and together they prayed and believed in God, for Hani, as a good uncle, could not raise the boy as an atheist. And the circle of love, once non-existent, grew into a realm of wonder. Hani gained friends who praised him for dedicating his life to the orphan child. The child grew into a man, got married and now lives with his wife and their children in his Uncle Hani's house. The day Hani's gold was stolen from him became the turning point in his life, for he gained, unthought of riches in the golden haired tot who found his heart and gave him back his trust in human nature.

JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, April 7

8:30 Bony
A story of police corruption in Australia, and how one policeman gathers all the missing links in a series of sudden disappearances and murders.

10:00 News In English
10:20 Da Best's On
Weekly pop show with Muhammad Al Jazireh, where he brings you the latest chart hitters in London.

11:00 Feature Film — The Jerry Sherwood Story

Starring: Beverly D'Angelo and Michael McGrady
A powerful drama, based on a true story of one mother's determined fight for justice. With the help of a reporter, she reopens the case of her son's mysterious death at the age of three while she was in prison.

Friday, April 8

7:45 Hotchpotch
This local programme is presented by Manal Azar.

8:00 Sixty minutes

9:00 Scene Of The Crime
Wild About Harry

Harry is an old judge who makes the mistake of marrying a much younger woman, who, in an effort to kill him, kills many people who unwittingly get in her way.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Black Powder
A local programme with English subtitles.

Saturday, April 9

7:45 Charlie Chaplin
A programme on Charlie Chaplin's old silent movies, including: Ace On The Balloon, Floor; Between Shadows; The Tramp; Work and The Pawn Shop.

8:30 Fresh Prince Of Bel Air
Bang The Drum Ashley
William pushes everybody around to learn to play various musical instruments... but to no avail.

9:00 One To One
This week, Dr. Ziad Rifa'i talks to Jordanian actor Nabeel Sawalha about the role of theatre in Jordan, with particular interest about his partner, Hisham Yanis, in their famous comedy Ahlan Hisham and Nabeel.

9:30 The Campbells
Dreams Stay With You
Neil goes back to Christ-ine... but finds she has got engaged; Despite her father's objections, Christine decides to marry Neil.

10:00 News In English
10:20 Feature Film — Journey To The Centre Of The Earth

Nine scientists take a trip into the deep, dangerous and volcanic earth.

Sunday, April 10

8:30 You Bet Your Life
A weekly entertaining quiz show with Bill Cosby.

9:10 Stolen Lives

The story of 30-year-old Dawn who, upon the death of her mother comes across a woman who reveals facts about her and her real mother; she starts having nightmares which push her

to investigate.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Island Son

The Christmas Story
On Christmas Eve, Dr. Daniel comes face to face with plague... and a mother whose sudden miscarriage changes her whole life.

11:10 The Upper Hand
Just The Job

An ex-soccer player becomes a butler. His services to the woman he works for expand to include advice.

Monday, April 11

8:30 The Nanny

Maggie is given the approval to go on her first date with Eddie on condition that her Nanny chaperons her.

9:00 Out Of The Past
Collapse

Reasons behind the decline and demise of great old civilisations might be the clues we need to help save our own civilisation.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Black Powder

A local programme with English subtitles.

11:10 Top Cops

True stories of how three cops managed to control a random killer in a supermarket, capture a kidnaper of five little girls and guarantee the release of a kidnapped businessman.

Tuesday, April 12

8:30 Cinema, Cinema

9:10 Moon Over Miami
A Missing Person

Walter and his partner are to locate a missing singer, whose disappearance they find is too well-staged.

10:00 News In English

10:20 The Cape Rebel

The Challenge Of Arende
Sleuth is back to his wife, only to realise that Meese was there before him. He packs his bag and he's on the run again.

11:10 The Second Half
Coughin Up Meat

David gets choked while having dinner at a restaurant.

Wednesday, April 13

8:30 Too Close For Comfort

Henry takes his daughters to Aspen, Colorado, for skiing... But definitely skiing is not his game.

9:00 Prism

This week Nida' Ramahi sheds light on the Amman Financial Market. The guest speaker is Mr. Umayya Toukan.

9:30 The Best Of Magic

10:00 News In English

10:20 The World Of The Thirties

A documentary relating the major events of the 1930's in America: from black'n white films to technical colour; the first plane to cross the Atlantic in 24 hours; Black Friday and the Depression; Al Capone... etc.

11:10 Poldark

Still sad over losing his fiancée to his cousin, Ross, most caringly celebrates the happy wedding of two of his workers.

Shakespeare returns to Jordan

By Jennifer Hamarneh
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Two different British teams have arrived in Amman to bring William Shakespeare "to life" for students and their teachers in Jordan. The two programmes, which coincidentally coincide, are being arranged in cooperation with the British Council in Amman, said council Assistant Director Ruth Hill.

Ms. Hill explained that the drama department of the council had been receiving increasing requests for Shakespeare productions in Jordan and the Arab region.

"So we set about to find a suitable company and a suitable production," she said. The council selected The New Shakespeare Company (NSC) and their "fun for the whole family" production of "The Taming Of The Shrew."

The coincidence is that just about the time the council's office here was preparing for the NSC production, the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) World Service asked for the council's cooperation in arranging Shakespeare workshops at schools and universities in Jordan to coincide with its radio broadcasts of its "Shakespeare Today" series marking the 430th anniversary of the illustrious playwright's birth.

So, said Ms. Hill, "we said, why not?"

Both the NSC and the BBC programmes include workshops for teachers and students of Shakespeare's works, which aim at "illuminating the plot and major themes of a play while illustrating the various processes often used in rehearsal, highlighting certain aspects of the play which would open up discussion material with the students."

The workshop for students, designed by the NSC, usually includes four presenters, headed each time by NSC Artistic and Managing Director Ian Talbot, with three NSC actors.

The structure of the workshop begins with a general 20-minute introduction of the role of an actor and the play. The workshop audience at this point comprises about 100 students. Next, the students are divided into four groups, and each presenter concentrates on a group of 25 students. Practical warm-up exercises are used, and a scene from the play is re-enacted through improvisation and study of text.

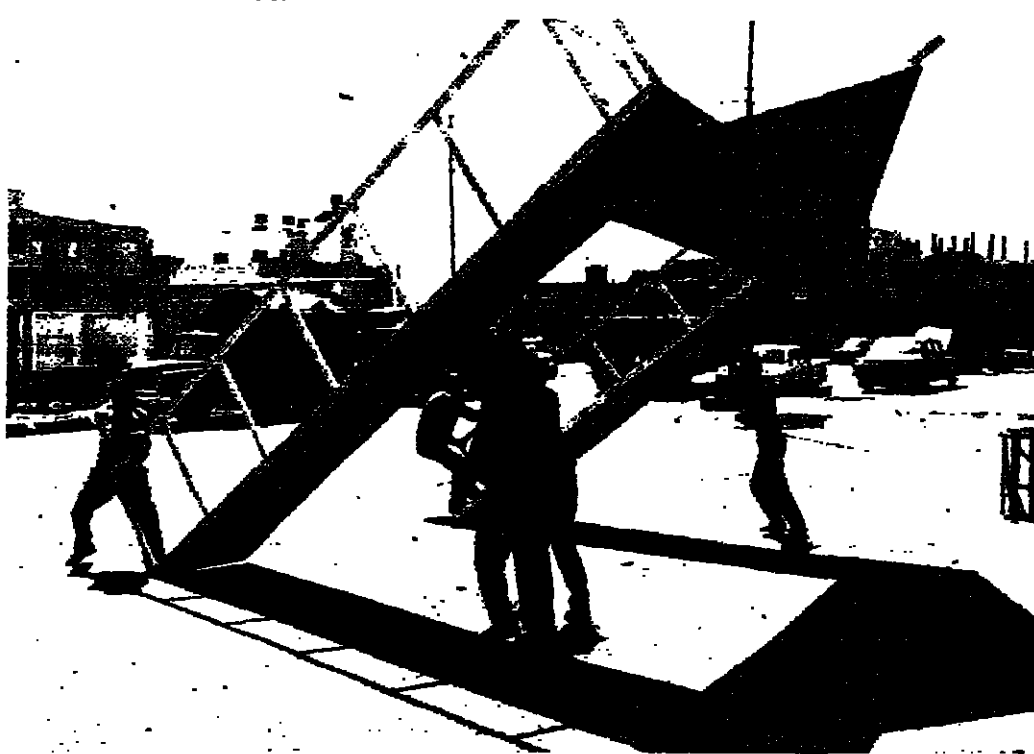
Finally the entire group unites and summarises experiences gained from the exercises, and a brief questions and answers period follows.

The NSC workshop for teachers, which took place on March 28, was designed to discuss material "that teachers can use with their classes to prepare their students for watching and getting the most out of the NSC's performance."

In addition, the NSC will also hold a separate workshop for about 30 to 40 Jordanian actors and theatre professionals on the subject of different ways of presenting and interpreting Shakespearean plays.

First to arrive in Jordan was NSC's Taming Of The Shrew Production Manager Richard Godfrey, who told the Jordan Times that the British Council had arranged that the company mount the comedy on a tour of the Middle East which includes the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Kuwait, Egypt, and Syria, as well as Jordan.

He described the NSC's production of The Taming



George Abdul Ahad, his carpenter Richard Godfrey hoist up the try team and Taming Of The main frame of the play's set Shrew Production Manager (photo by Rana Hussein)

Of The Shrew as a "spectacle."

"Even if one does not understand all the English, the action, the colour, the music, the costumes make for a lively and entertaining experience," said Mr. God-

frey, the son of actors himself.

For the young production manager, who is on his first visit to the region, preparing for the Amman production has been a challenge. He explained that the

company, which had shipped the stage set from London, ran into difficulties in transporting it from Egypt to Jordan. Therefore, he said, it was decided to construct a new set here in Amman.

Mr. Godfrey set out to find a carpenter for the job and discovered George Abdul Ahad, proprietor of a carpentry shop in Marka.

All the sets of NSC's productions are free-standing, said Mr. Godfrey. The NSC has been performing for 30 years at The Open Air Theatre of London's Regent's Park, he said, and thus the use of free-standing sets.

Mr. Godfrey said that as the frame of the set began to take shape, Mr. Abdul Ahad's business neighbours became increasingly curious. It wasn't until the frame was tested to see if it would stand without falling that his onlookers seemed to accept that this strange looking, approximately four metre high contraption was meant for a stage.

On the wobbly sidewalk on the corner of a small commercial area of Marka, up went the frame and up it stood. Mission accomplished, Mr. Godfrey set off to have the frame painted.

Again he found a local firm; this one specialised in sign and banner painting. He found the colours he needed and said it was just a matter of training the painters in the style required.

**William Shakespeare's
The Taming Of The Shrew**
Presented by
The New Shakespeare Company

Director of Production
Production Manager

Ian Talbot
Richard Godfrey

Actors:

George Johnson as Petruchio
Cathryn Harrison as Katherina
Cameron Blakely as Tranio
Simon Harrison as Hortensio
Jonathan Markwood as Lucentio
Ian Talbot (director) as Grumio
Catherine Terry as Bianca

At Al Hassan Ibn Talal Auditorium
University of Jordan

Monday, April 11 at 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, April 12 at 5:00 p.m.

"It's important that the painting be done right, because so much of the character of the set comes from the painting," said Mr. Godfrey.

The Taming Of The Shrew, a Shakespearean comedy is described by the Open Air Theatre 1993 season playbill as follows:

"Christopher Sly, a tinker lying drunk by a tavern, is found by a Lord, who for a joke cause him to be put

to bed and treated, on waking, as a nobleman newly cured of madness. A company of actors arrive and perform a play for the Lord and Sly.

In this play two young men arrive in Padua. Lucentio, son of a merchant from Pisa, has come to study; Petruchio, a country gentleman, has come to find a wealthy wife. Baptista, a rich merchant of Padua, has two attractive daughters, Bianca and Katherina. Bianca seems sweet-tempered, obedient and has many suitors; Katherina is quick-tempered, disobedient and her father and all Paduans think her nothing but a shrew. Consequently nobody is bold enough to marry her. Lucentio falls in love with Bianca, but Baptista makes a condition that Bianca may not marry before Katherina. Petruchio marries Katherina and is determined to tame her. An extraordinary battle of the sexes ensues which eventually Petruchio seems to win by his wit, eloquence, masculinity and outrageous behaviour. Lucentio is not free to marry Bianca, and all are amazed by the remarkable change in Katherina.

The culmination of the weeks of activity by the NSC in Jordan on the subject of William Shakespeare — his life and work — will be its performances of The Taming Of The Shrew on April 11 and 12.

Held under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor, there will be two public performances of the comedy at the University of Jordan. A special private performance on April 10 is being held for students of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) Schools in Jordan.

'Shakespeare Today'

As part of the BBC's "Shakespeare Today" series, a compact schedule of 13 workshops was scheduled from April 2 to April 6 introducing two senior BBC figures and the head of drama from Shakespeare's birthplace, Stratford-on-Avon. According to the BBC, school children, university students and teachers were "encouraged to take part in the sessions which besides looking at specific plays such as Romeo And Juliet and Macbeth, showed how productions were staged in Shakespeare's time."

"We aim to prove that Shakespeare is fun and his plays are every bit as relevant today as when they were written 400 years ago," said Ann Theroux, the BBC's Features and Arts Editor and one of the three-person team running the workshops. "If we can open a door to Shakespeare's world for young people in Jordan today, we will have succeeded," added Ms. Theroux who taught Shakespeare's plays in East Africa and Singapore.

The BBC workshop team arrived last Saturday morning and were sped off to conduct their first session at Amman National School where an excited gathering of 150 eighth to eleventh graders and their teachers were waiting.

At the workshop the students were introduced to the BBC World Service, its news programmes and features by Ms. Theroux.

Next, Sue Cokyll, who launched a major English literature series for the World Service entitled "Looking at Literature," gave a brief presentation on some of the broadcast corporation's English language teaching programmes. She explained and played a taped excerpt of one of the higher level broadcast of English literature narrated from the Charles Dickens, classic The Pickwick Papers.

The students then heard from Pat Friday, head of English and theatre studies at Stratford Upon Avon Grammar School For Girls. Ms. Friday spoke of what it

**Pat Friday of the
Stratford-Upon-
Avon Grammar
School For Girls
lectures students of
the Amman National
School on the
theatre during the
time of
Shakespeare (photo
by Rana Hussein)**



was like to go to the theatre in Shakespeare's time.

During the final segment of the workshop 10 children are selected from the audience to participate in "practical hands-on exercise" in acting out scenes from Romeo And Juliet, each time playing the scene differently.

Alina Kalaji, who teaches eighth and tenth grade English at Amman National School, told the Jordan Times that Shakespeare plays were part of her curriculum. She found that by letting the students "be the creators," i.e., write their own dialogues, then read and compare them to original Shakespeare plays, the students "respond beautifully" to learning the work's of the world's most famous playwright.

The BBC team Monday held an "Open House" at the

British Council where the public was invited to come and learn more about Shakespeare and the BBC World Service.

The World Service's Shakespeare Today season will feature poetry, documentaries, music, comedies and quizzes in addition to productions of the author's plays, according to Linda Harriett, press officer for BBC World Service.

She said the series includes more than 50 programmes, including descriptions of how Shakespeare's plays are performed around the world and how after 400 years they still inspire film and stage musicals, writers, actors and audiences to this day.

The series will be aired during April, May and June.

Seeing Hugh Grant in triplicate

By Matt Wolf
The Associated Press

LONDON — Get ready, the actor says as he lapses into his best mock-French accent, for "un hommage a Hugh Grant." A self-advertisement for a man on a roll.

"I want people to write about my extraordinary range and versatility," the 33-year-old Londoner deadpanned, sinking deep into a sofa at Blakes Hotel, an island of Hollywood chic near his Chelsea flat.

More sheepishly — and seriously — he added, "obviously I'm hoping people will sort of notice me a bit."

The dapper Oxford graduate celebrated in recent years for his cheekbones now gets to show he's got charm and talent, as well.

Not long ago, Grant seemed fated to play aristocratic, white-flanneled swells in period pictures — as he did in Maurice and The Remains Of The Day, both from the producing-directing team of Ismail Merchant and James Ivory.

But there's a funnier, more audacious Hugh Grant who this month opened in three films across the United States:

— In Sirens, the actor brings a droll bemusement to

director John Duigan's odd tale of eroticism unleashed in rural Australia. Tara Fitzgerald and Sam Neill costar.

— In Bitter Moon, he's the seafaring spouse absorbed by, and into, Peter Coyote's tales of sexual sadomasochism. Roman Polanski's film, shot 2½ years ago and also starring Emmanuelle Seigner and Kristin Scott-Thomas, is just now getting an American release.

— Lastly, and pre-eminently, comes Four Weddings And A Funeral. Mike Newell's romantic comedy casts Grant in what should be his breakthrough performance: As the sweetly bumbling bachelor Charles who's none too likely to make it to the church on time.

"It's pure coincidence," he said of the convergence of openings. "But there can be quite long periods as well when there's nothing, so I know how that works."

An attentive flurry followed his screen debut as the bisexual Clive, opposite James Wilby, in the 1987 Maurice, adapted from the E.M. Forster novel. (It was the kind of posh Oxbridge role he had played while still an undergraduate, in a 1982 student film, Privileged, which had a limited

art-house release.)

Grant, who turned to acting after considering a career as an art historian, continued to find work but many of the films were hardly worth it: Ken Russell's Lair Of The White Worm, and James Lapine's Impromptu, in which he played Chopin to Julian Sands' Liszt, are now the stuff of trivia buffs.

"Films are so thin on the ground here that you have to accept things really you probably shouldn't be doing," said Grant.

"I did that for a long time, and it was a big mistake. You have to be tough as bloody nails and wait for parts that really inspire you."

Grant credits director Polanski and Bitter Moon for getting him back on track.

"That film did such a lot of good for me in England," he said. "Although the critics were literally divided — some saw it as a joke bad, some saw it as a joke brilliant — people tended to like me and thought I was quite funny."

The fact is Grant truly is funny. His initially stiff-backed and elegant screen persona gave no hint of the apt mimicry (he's particularly good on "frightening American Agents" and

north of England TV producers) and the wry self-mockery that make him so engaging to meet.

In Sirens, he said, he tried to be "groovy" as well as funny so that the clash between free-spiritedness and conventional morality in 1930s Australia not seem a cliché.

"I was worried the clash was a little 1960s, a little obvious," Grant said of the film, in which he plays English vicar Anthony Campion, who travels to New South Wales to investigate the erotic content of the art of real-life painter Norman Lindsay, who died in 1969.

"I felt there had to be more going on, hence making my character think he was quite avant-garde and groovy... I was quite happy to champion Anthony's cause against such a tired old Bohemianism."

Grant has three further films set to roll.

First up is An Awfully Big Adventure, adapted from Beryl Bainbridge's novel, in which he will play a gay theatre director working in 1947 Liverpool. Mike Newell, who made Four Weddings, directs.

In Restoration, based on a novel by Rose Tremain, Grant joins Meg Ryan and Robert Downey Jr. in a tale of 17th-century London.

The film teams Grant with Privileged director, Michael Hoffman.

Then there's An Englishman Who Went Up A Hill And Came Down A Mountain, about two mapmakers in Wales in 1910. The director is Christopher Monger, a Welshman based in Los Angeles.

Further ahead, he is to play Edward Ferrers in Emma Thompson's screenplay of Sense And Sensibility, the 1811 Jane Austen novel. Grant appeared with Thompson as the journalist who learns the facts of life from Anthony Hopkins' butler in The Remains Of The Day.

What Grant won't do are the mainstream projects his Hollywood agents send him.

"Do they really think I want to be in the new Schwarzenegger film?" he asked. "I've seen it go wrong so often: You're shoved into the nearest Hollywood film, and you're awful in it and it's awful and that's the end of it."

"When I said I'm sorry, I don't like any of the 12 scripts you've sent me, I thought (the agents) would respect me for it."

"I've now heard on the grapevine they rather hate me."

After the Oscars, the race for the box office

By Michael Miller
Reuters

LOS ANGELES — Two Oscar-winning films such as Schindler's List and The Piano wasted no time in launching full-scale campaigns to cash in on their awards.

The names of the winners had hardly rolled off the lips of the trophy presenters at the 66th Academy Awards ceremony when advertising departments at the victorious studios and newspapers went into high gear.

A full-page advertisement in the Los Angeles Times trumpeted 7 Winner, Academy Awards, for Schindler's List, and went on to tabulate "Spielberg's list."

Best Picture and Best Director for Steven Spielberg, plus five technical awards.

The Piano, with three awards Best Actress for Holly Hunter, Best Supporting Actress for 11-year-old Anna Paquin, and Best Original Screenplay for Director Jane Campion, also sought to get in on the act, as did Philadelphia, with Best Actor for Tom Hanks and Best Original Song for Bruce Springsteen.

Analysts differ on just how much of a financial boost an Oscar or Oscars give to a film. Some say it can add millions of dollars in revenues at the box office while others are not so sure.

But most agree that when Oscar winners are released on videocassettes, the profits soar.

This year, Variety, a film industry trade paper, forecast that Schindler's List would reap the most benefits in terms of box office revenues, while Chris Dixon, an analyst with Painwebber Inc. said The Piano would probably see most benefits.

Both are already financial winners with or without their Oscars. Schindler's List, made for about \$30 million, has already grossed \$60 million in U.S. sales, while The Piano, made for a mere \$8 million, has taken in \$35 million.

Universal, which released Schindler's List, Spielberg's epic film based on the story of wartime German industrialist Oskar Schindler, said with its Oscars the film is capable of generating \$100 million in domestic sales.

The Piano, the poignant tale of a mute Scottish

woman in an arranged marriage a world away in 19th century New Zealand, will also see bigger audiences.

"Major awards, I suspect, are going to help increase the box office," said Julie Polkes, a spokeswoman for Miramax, the Walt Disney subsidiary that distributed the film.

Meanwhile, for winners and non-winners alike there are no losers according to the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences — Los Angeles was transformed into one huge party once the show was over.

The Governors Ball, held in a huge tent outside the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, saw 1,500 of film's elite sipping champagne, munching on caviar and dining on smoked salmon.

The elite could also be found partying in Morton's, a popular celebrity hang-out in Hollywood, as well as Chasen's in Beverly Hills and a half dozen other top eateries.

Wherever Spielberg went, he was greeted with cheering and prolonged clapping. A basically shy man when not on a movie set, Spielberg acknowledged the accolades with a beaming grin.

Gene therapy treatment reported successful

By Randall Mikkelsen
Reuter

PHILADELPHIA — A Canadian woman with a potentially fatal inherited liver disorder is the first reported patient to be successfully treated for an illness using gene therapy, researchers said.

The experimental treatment, described in the current issue of the journal *Nature Genetics*, reduced high cholesterol levels in a 30-year-old resident of Quebec City whose liver was incapable of removing the substance.

"We have demonstrated the long-term safety and efficacy of gene therapy in this patient," said Dr. James Wilson, head of the Institute for Human Gene Therapy at the University of Pennsylvania Medical Centre.

"Gene therapy is really in its infancy. We, as others, believe there is tremendous promise for this new form of therapy," Dr. Wilson told a news conference.

In gene therapy of the type reported Thursday, defective genes in cells are replaced with properly

working genes.

Doctors said it was unclear what impact the treatment would have on the woman's longevity, but the patient, speaking through an interpreter, exuded confidence.

"I have a lot of confidence and faith in the therapy that I've had. And I'm certainly going to live to 90 years of age and more, probably," she told reporters, speaking on condition that she not be identified.

The woman suffers from a disease called familial hypercholesterolemia, in which a defective gene re-

ders the liver incapable of removing harmful "LDL" cholesterol from the blood. Excess levels of the cholesterol accumulate in the blood and cause severe heart problems.

Incidents of the disease are unusually high in Quebec, where its roots are traced to early 18th century French immigrants, said the woman's Canadian doctor, Dr. Paul Lupien.

Dr. Wilson's patient had a heart attack at age 16 and a coronary bypass at age 26. Two of her brothers had the disease and died of heart attacks in their 20s.

In the gene therapy treatment, begun in June 1992, Dr. Wilson's team removed about 15 per cent of the woman's liver.

Using a virus into which a normal version of the gene had been spliced, researchers inserted the gene into cells from the removed liver portion, then injected the cells into a vein leading to the woman's remaining liver.

"What we were giving the patient back were the genetically corrected cells," Dr. Wilson told a news conference.

The woman was treated

at University of Michigan Medical Centre, where Dr. Wilson and much of his team worked before moving to the University of Pennsylvania.

Dr. Wilson said the woman's cholesterol level had fallen by 30-35 per cent within five months after the start of the therapy. It later rose slightly but is now stable at 17-20 per cent below earlier levels.

She is also being aided by cholesterol reducing drugs, which had not been effective prior to the therapy, he said.

Although her LDL

cholesterol level remains far above normal, her levels of beneficial cholesterol also rose, cutting her "cardiac risk ratio" nearly in half, Dr. Wilson said.

"For all practical purposes, we have functionally corrected about five per cent of the patient's total liver cells," Dr. Wilson said. He said the therapy's ability to correct liver function is limited by the amount of liver cells doctors can remove to infuse with the corrected genes.

The woman will need medical supervision for the

rest of her life to ensure the permanently inserted genes continue to work. The woman told reporters she has felt healthier since the treatment and does not worry very much about her liver.

Dr. Wilson's team is also using gene therapy to treat four other patients with the same illness. So far the treatment is going well, he said. Other gene therapy trials are underway in the United States, but this is the first instance where a successful treatment was reported in a scientific journal.

Protein in blood may signal cancers

By Malcolm Ritter
The Associated Press

TUCSON, Ariz. — A recently discovered protein shows up chiefly in the blood of some cancer patients and may prove to be a useful indicator of breast and prostate cancer, a researcher said.

Blood tests for the protein may one day help in early detection and in tracking the results of therapy, said Margaret Hanauk of the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Centre.

She presented early data

on the protein at a seminar sponsored by the American Cancer Society.

"It appears to be the most promising (tumour marker) I've seen in a long time," said Dr. Harmon Eyre, the society's deputy executive vice president for medical affairs and research.

But Dr. Michael Torosian, a surgical oncologist at the University of Pennsylvania, said Dr. Hanauk's data suggest the test would not be useful for early detection of breast tumours.

Dr. Hanauk said the protein can be found by a simple blood test. She said

the function of the protein, called P65, is not known.

She did not offer detailed findings involving prostate cancer, saying the company she did that research with is keeping results confidential. But she said P65 levels were much higher in 311 prostate cancer patients than in 353 men with benign enlargement of the prostate.

A P65 test might be used along with a standard test for another substance, called prostate-specific antigen, to detect prostate cancer, she said.

In a study focusing on

breast cancer, only 12 of 112 women without cancer scored above the study's statistical cutoff for normal levels, she said. In contrast, 119 of 132 blood samples from patients in various stages of breast cancer scored above the cutoff, she said. Twelve of 68 women with benign breast disease scored above the cutoff.

But the study found that women in the very earliest stages of cancer had protein levels that were not obviously above the cutoff. In a telephone interview, Dr. Torosian cited that result in explaining his skepticism about early detection.

But Dr. Hanauk said that the cutoff is still appreciably above the normal average for the general population and that women scoring close to it should be checked further for cancer.

In a separate presentation, Danny Welch of the Pennsylvania State University College of Medicine in Hershey presented evidence that an unidentified gene on Chromosome 6 can prevent spreading of the skin cancer melanoma.

The work was done with human melanoma cells that normally spread aggressively

ly when transplanted into mice. The cells lack a piece of Chromosome 6. When researchers supplied them with an entire Chromosome 6, the cancers did not spread in the mice.

To locate the responsible gene, Dr. Welch said, researchers will cut the chromosome in half to see which half suppresses the cancer. Then that segment will be cut in half for another test, and so on until the gene is located.

Eyre said identifying the gene could give leads for controlling the spread of melanoma.

Dieting increases rates of heart disease, diabetes

By Paul Raeburn
The Associated Press

TAMPA, Florida — Men who say they are always dieting had dramatically higher rates of heart disease and diabetes than men who say they never diet, a new study showed.

The results appear to raise questions about research that has established obesity as a risk for heart disease, said the study's author, Steven N. Blair, an epidemiologist at the Cooper Institute for Aerobics Research in Dallas.

"It's a paradox," Dr.

Blair said. Researchers know that gaining weight raises the risks of disease. But it's not clear whether losing weight lowers the risks again, he said.

"One of the fundamental tenets of the weight loss industry is if you get people to eat less, they'll lose

weight. And if they lose weight, they'll be better off. And there is no evidence to support either one of those," Dr. Blair said.

He discussed his findings at the American Heart Association's annual epidemiology meeting. The study also found that

men who keep their weight steady, even if they are overweight, have less risk of disease than men whose weight fluctuates by as little as 10 pounds.

Earlier studies have also suggested that losing and regaining weight, or "yo-yo dieting," is associated with higher health risks than keeping weight steady.

"In general, weight cycling has been hard to figure out," said Dr. Stephen P. Fortmann, a professor of medicine at Stanford University as one of the organizers of the Heart Association meeting. "It is another reason not to diet."

The best way to control weight is through exercise, not dieting, Dr. Fortmann said. Dr. Blair suggested a low-fat diet with a lot of fresh fruits and vegetables. He advised people to avoid gaining weight in the first place.

The study was based on a survey of 12,025 Harvard University graduates with an average age of 67. The question Dr. Blair asked them was: "How often are you dieting (eating less than you would like)?" Those who said "always" had a heart disease rate of

23.1 per cent, more than double the 10.6 rate of those who answered "never."

The men who always dieted had a 38.3 per cent rate of hypertension and 14.6 per cent rate of diabetes, compared with a 23.4 per cent rate of hypertension and 3 per cent rate of diabetes for those who said they never dieted.

Among those men who dieted part of the time, the study found that the more they dieted, the higher their rates of disease. Men who dieted "often" had higher disease rates than those who dieted "sometimes." That group, in turn, had higher rates than those who dieted "rarely."

Even among the leanest members of the group, those who dieted more had higher rates of disease than those who dieted less, he said.

Dr. Blair also asked them to indicate their body shape at various ages, giving him an indication of their weight variation. Those whose weight varied had higher risks than those whose weight was steady, he found.

Low tar cigarettes 'stronger than normal cigarettes'

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Cigarettes advertised as low in nicotine are actually higher than regular cigarettes, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has charged.

The claim came during an often heated House subcommittee hearing into the tobacco industry.

FDA Commissioner David Kessler said an investigation revealed that companies have the technology to increase nicotine levels in cigarettes, increasing people's addiction.

one company created a special smokeless tobacco targeted at 15 to 35-year-olds and then encouraged them to graduate to brands with a higher nicotine level.

"Some of today's cigarettes may in fact qualify as high-technology nicotine delivery systems that deliver nicotine in quantities that are more than sufficient to create and sustain addiction," said Mr. Kessler.

The FDA is considering classifying nicotine as a drug, which would allow it to regulate and possibly ban nearly all tobacco products.

Tobacco Institute spokesman Charles Whitely told the subcommittee that the industry did not agree that nicotine was harmful.

"I deny that cigarettes cause cancer and are not safe," said Mr. Whitely.

'Touching pre-term babies is good for them'

LONDON (R) — Touching tiny babies who are born prematurely is not only harmless but can make them more intelligent, researchers have told a conference.

Several studies presented to the British Psychological Society annual conference in Brighton, southern England, found that babies kept in incubators responded well to being touched.

Elvidina Nabuco Adamson-Macedo of the University of Wolverhampton told the conference that premature babies systematically stroked using a procedure known as touching and caressing — tender in caring (tac-tic) did better in certain skills at school than those left with little human contact.

"There is still a myth — there are many people that think babies don't like to be stroked," she told Reuters in a telephone interview.

Dr. Macedo said that in the course of putting together 14 studies in several countries, she found premature babies were often left alone in their incubators for hours on end.

But studies by herself and colleagues showed that these babies responded to the tac-tic therapy, which consists of gently stroking the infant from head to toe.

Dr. Macedo said that when children with a mean age of seven years who had received tac-tic therapy were compared with a control group, "results indicated that tac-tic children performed significantly better in most of the tests."

For instance, children who had been stroked as babies built more complex structures with toy blocks, compared to those who had not been stroked. Some of them merely piled blocks on top of one another, she said in a summary of her work.

Aine De Roiste of the University College of North Wales found benefits were evident within the first few months for babies who received stimulation for approximately 20 minutes per day, from the early days of life until they left hospital.

Tests showed the infants who were touched had "significantly higher" mental development scores and scored better on tests of imitation, comprehension, vocalisation and socialisation.

Other tests found babies lay still while they were being touched but then moved more on their own afterwards. None of the tests showed any harm came from the treatment.

ANSWERS

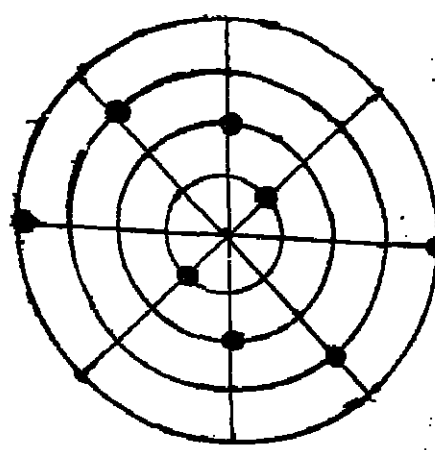
BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

1. A Basque is an inhabitant of the region of the western Pyrenees on the Bay of Biscay; a basque is a short, skirt-like addition to a woman's bodice.
2. The saxophone is called after Antoine Joseph Sax, the inventor.
3. Pluto was the god of the lower world, Hades, and has nothing to do with plutocracy, which is derived from the Greek ploutos, wealth, and means government by rich. "Effete plutocracy" is Mussolini's name for England and America.
4. If you leave the lid off the saucepan the soup will get more salty, since some of the water boils away but all the salt remains. If the lid is on, the steam condenses on it and runs back as water, so that the saltiness remains unchanged.
5. Stravinsky was a financial adventurer, to use no harsher terms, who was closely connected with several influential French politicians. His trial caused the "Stravinsky scandal." Stravinsky was a famous Russian composer, probably best known for his ballet, *The Firebird*.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

PUZZLES

1. Seconds in a week; 604,800 to 528,000.
2. 94
3. DOTTO.

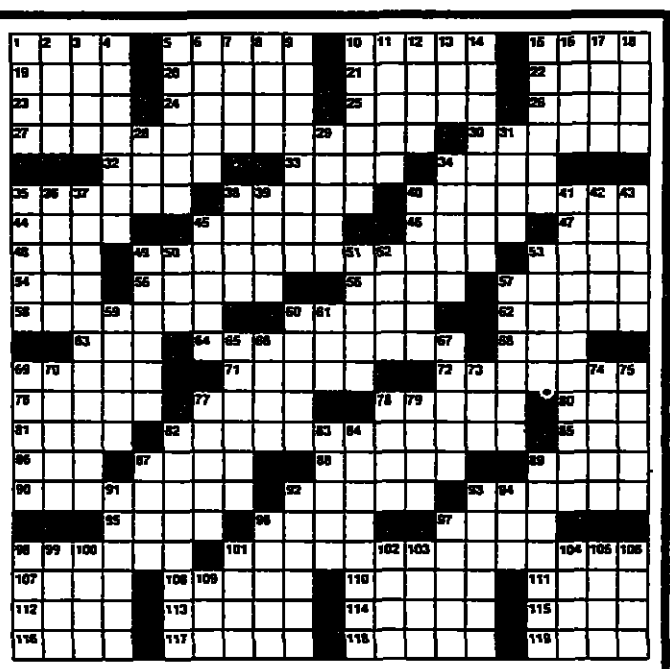


WEEKEND CROSSWORD

RETROACTIVE
By James & Phyllis Barrick

- ACROSS
1. Crazed severely
 5. En
 10. Spacetrack
 15. A pronoun
 19. Musical refrain
 20. Of an Indian people
 21. Embroid
 22. Interrupt
 23. Yank, abbr.
 24. Hart
 25. "Home"
 26. River in France
 27. Know-it-all
 28. Small passenger
 30. Small
 32. Cock's place
 33. Green god
 34. Radar image
 35. Puno, in music

- DOWN
1. Scabbe slice
 2. Mock
 3. A Balkan
 4. Sals
 6. Lung novel
 8. Architectural
 9. Landlord
 10. Off (swatted)
 11. Fines
 12. Believe — not
 13. Write
 14. — sales
 15. Play people
 16. Legatee
 17. Effortlessness
 18. Perfect place
 19. RSPV word
 20. Goddess of peace



Last Week's Cryptograms

1. Year-old grandchild teaches her two grandmothers a new card game on the kitchen floor — "Fifty-two, Pick Up."
2. Nothing can soothe your soul as nicely as resting your feet on a footstool.
3. We meet friends of friends. Is it only coincidence, or is it really a small, close world?
4. Old-wicked witch's nose twitches while she slowly stirs her stinky spell pot.

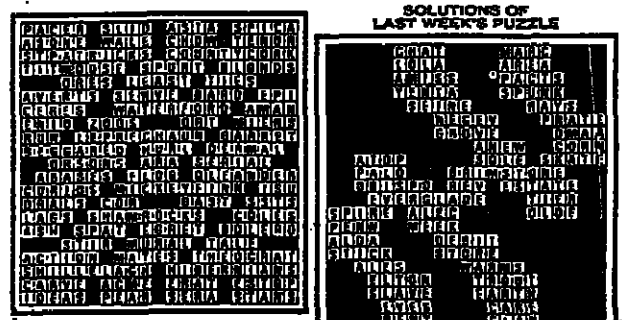
CRYPTOGRAMS

1. JZOA HLC IOAQR UQDQGOAI WOUCM
DHWSMI BHB TLIQU, ZHJ WH DZOM
OFBVSQA "TSQCGM WBSDI" HA DZQOC HW
ZQD BSCSWO? OFUORDQHA! —By Sol Tulankar

2. AKRFV MNLOEPJQI LKRS GFQJNFI,
JPEFV QSDW QSNFVI, J GKQOJVD EC
CJPNQA LNCQWDI JFM SNI GKQOVD
MNLOEPJ. —By Rita Salvato

3. ENSUFLFT PAYDAY BY BAYPOPIFUN
DUBLY FR SCBGNE YP CFTC
BIRNLNNFRO GBYN. —By Frank N. Stein

4. AILYQGRBA ASKALY ASKMYT YU PAY
GRATFEUPT ICYAL AILYQGRBA
CULAMITY. —By Ed Huddleston



- Diagramless 19 x 19, By Harold B. Coats
- ACROSS
1. Hipp
 5. Blits
 11. Also maternal
 12. Project
 13. Drawing rooms
 14. Certain
 15. Landlord
 16. Hipp place
 17. Sale of land and
 18. Slave of yore
 19. Like some clothes

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 19. Like some clothes

- ACROSS
20. A Garfunkel
 21. Female principle
 22. In Chinese philosophy
 23. Eagle's nest
 24. Fill up
 25. Golden — Bridge
 26. — whale
 27. Rainbow
 28. Attans
 29. Foz or feda
 30. Sign up

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Bomber kills 7 in Afula

(Continued from page 1)

riories were barred from entering Israel for at least eight days, said police commissioner Rafi Peled.

In Cairo, PLO negotiators condemned the attack and said it underscored the urgency to move talks ahead.

"The continuing acts of violence are extremely regrettable. We do not support it. We are exerting all our efforts to rid the region of acts of violence," said Maj. General Nasr Youssef, who will head the Palestinian police force in Gaza and the West Bank town of Jericho.

There had been widespread concern in Israel about such an attack since Hamas vowed revenge for the Hebron massacre.

Mohammad Nazzari, a Hamas spokesman in Jordan, said Hamas launched the attack after the 40th day of mourning for victims of the Hebron mosque massacre.

"We pledge that we will escalate our attacks on Israeli targets," he said.

The anonymous caller in Jerusalem said Hamas' military wing, the Izzeddin Al Qassam

Brigades, carried out the attack. He warned Mr. Rabin of more suicide bombings.

"(We) claim responsibility for the suicide operation in the town of Afula which killed eight people. We tell Rabin that suicide operations in the coming period will increase."

In mosque loudspeakers in Gaza City also, Hamas claimed responsibility for the attack saying it was aimed at halting the Israel-PLO plan for Palestinian autonomy.

"We claim responsibility for the heroic suicide operation in Afula. We proved to the world that the arms of (Hamas) are capable of stopping all the conspiracies that are plotting against our people both here and abroad," one broadcast said.

Palestinians also shot and wounded four Israeli soldiers in an ambush on the outskirts of Shati refugee camp in the occupied Gaza Strip on Wednesday, Palestinian sources said.

The army said it was checking the report. The sources said the soldiers were riding in a command car when attacked. The guerrillas fled.

Arafat describes visit as positive

(Continued from page 1)

ments in the Israeli-PLO negotiations.

Also expected to be discussed between the King and Mr. Arafat was the status of Jerusalem following Jordanian criticism that the Arab group at the United Nations, including the PLO, had mishandled the language of the resolution and opened the door for the U.S. to get a precedent by abstaining on parts of the resolution referring to Jerusalem.

Observers expected the King to have reaffirmed Jordan's stand that Jerusalem is not simply a Palestinian concern but an issue that concerns the entire Muslim World and as such there had to be more Jordanian-Palestinian coordination over the issue.

Mr. Arafat described his visit to Jordan as "very constructive and positive" and said it offered "a good opportunity for discussions...particularly for the meeting centred on Jerusalem...and ways to enhance Jordanian-Palestinian cooperation and coordination."

The Jordan News Agency.

Petra, said late Tuesday that the King and Mr. Arafat emphasised the need for increased cooperation and coordination as well as joint action vis-a-vis the peace process.

PLO and Israeli negotiators in Cairo have been trying to finalise an agreement on the deployment of an 8,500-10,000 strong Palestinian police force in Gaza and Jericho. Israeli officials have indicated that an advance team of Palestinian police officers can enter the occupied territories this week.

Yasser Abed Rabbo, an Arafat confidant, told reporters before he left along with the PLO leader that the Palestinian forces would head to Gaza and Jericho "some time before the end of this month."

Mr. Abed Rabbo criticised Israel for the delay in the implementation of the Sept. 13 agreement saying that "will lead to weakening the credibility of the whole peace process."

"It is in everybody's interests that we immediately take practical steps on the ground," Mr. Abed Rabbo said.

'Jerusalem linked to Islam'

(Continued from page 1)

pression and best in presenting reason in dialogue. I believe that the media in particular have a role to play but without much rhetoric and excessive emotions.

"We have to conduct a dialogue that caters to the spirit of the modern age and we have to be aware of our rights and highlight them."

"Our dialogue could be emotional, but it should have reason and responsibility, especially as we mourn our martyrs who fell in the Hebron massacre. We have to direct our reason and dialogue in a true and scientific manner away from selfishness and we should not allow weakness to be the sole method of expression because this would lead to counter-violence devoid of reason."

"Through your courage and wisdom you can encourage people to resort to reason and positive thinking and can enhance the spirit of wisdom as we strive to remind the world of the greatness of Islam and the greatness of the Arab Muslim-Christian project. Remember that Jerusalem is in need of your efforts under the current difficult circumstances."

Several speakers among the delegates addressed the meeting, focusing on the importance of Christian-Islamic dialogue.

Field Marshal Abdul Rahman Swaroudhab of Sudan paid tribute to His Majesty King Hussein's devotion and dedication to safeguarding the holy places in Jerusalem.

He noted that the King sold

part of his personal property in order to finance the restoration of the holy sites in Jerusalem.

The scholars who took part in the three-day meeting, organised by the General Islamic Congress for Jerusalem, issued a statement at the end of their conference denouncing American policies for their disregard of the international resolutions regarding Jerusalem.

The statement condemned American policies, which "express Zionism's ambitions and intentions to seize the Holy City and make it the united capital of Israel."

The statement also rejected the American stand vis-a-vis the Hebron massacre and Washington's "opposition to a resolution that would have condemned Israel's terrorism."

It deplored Washington's retreat from the U.N. Security Council resolution that considered Jerusalem as part of the occupied territories and not a disputed land.

The statement called on the Arab and Islamic countries to unify their rank and adopt a collective position with regard to "the issues of destiny, foremost of which the issue of Jerusalem."

It called on the Arabs and Muslims to "defend Arab and Islamic rights in the face of Zionism's expansionist and aggressive plots."

The statement urged Muslims and Christians to "promote their dialogue, encourage tolerance and solidarity among the faithful and set up a special fund for the reconstruction of Jerusalem."

Yemeni leaders 'committed to unity'

(Continued from page 1)

failure of the talks to President Saleh's inability to recognise that the mismatched merger between his north and Mr. Beidh's south Yemen in 1990 had failed to create a unitary state and that other, looser forms of federation should be considered.

The sources in the Aden-based YSP of former Marxists accused Mr. Saleh's General People's Congress (GPC), a party of loyalists who had served a succession of northern military presidents, of an un-

compromising stance at Salalah.

They said the GPC was refusing to accept the fact that the union was no more than a charade.

The GPC said on Tuesday the talks founded on Mr. Beidh's insistence that rival army units should withdraw to positions on either side of the pre-union border held before 1990.

Some northern military units were moved to the south and southern units were deployed in the north after the merger in a token gesture of unity.

Fishing with a difference in Lebanon

By Hatham Haddadin
Reuters

TYRE — "I don't have to think about it. I choose the dynamite," said fisherman Mousa Assaf with a smile. "That net is just for decoration. I haven't used it in about a month."

Fishing is different in south Lebanon.

The hazardous practice of dynamite fishing and the constant threat of being shot at by Israeli gunboats patrolling to stop seaborne commando raids make it a matter of life or death.

"We pay with blood for our daily bread," said Hussein Al Dayekh, 37, hiding what remains of his right arm. His hand was blown to pieces when the dynamite stick he was aiming at passing fish exploded prematurely.

Mr. Dayekh was one of the luckier ones. The fishermen of this ancient seaport tell the story of 14-year-old Badi, who died when the explosives he accidentally dropped exploded.

Several fishermen have also been wounded by Israeli gunfire in the area, where the Israeli navy killed two Palestinian guerrillas on jet skis last October as they attempted a raid on northern Israel.

Security sources say the guerrillas operate from coastal refugee camps flanking Tyre.

The 500 fishermen of Tyre also risk seizure and detention by Israeli boats. More than a dozen have been grabbed since February for interrogation. They are usually released within 24 hours.

"They (Israelis) ask if you know any guerrillas. They are afraid of raids. That's why they harass us," said Khalil Dramess, 28, who was held recently.

The fishermen brave arrest to fish off Israel's self-declared occupation zone in south Lebanon since constant dynamiting has severely depleted stocks near Tyre.

They know the dangers of dynamite fishing, which mushroomed during the chaos of Lebanon's 1975-90 civil war, but do it to earn quick money.

"Dynamite gives better

yield. Instead of working all night to make 10,000 (Lebanese) pounds, you make 100,000 pounds worth of fish in three minutes," Kamel Khairallah said as he cleaned his small wooden boat.

The fishermen make the powerful explosives locally known as "troobine", a distortion of "torpille", the French word for torpedo, by cooking ammonium nitrate and sawdust on a coal fire and adding a detonator.

Serious fishermen detonate underwater bags filled with up to 50 kg of the home-made concoction mixed with gravel to add enough weight to make them sink.

"Dynamite gives better yield. Instead of working all night to make 10,000 (Lebanese) pounds, you make 100,000 worth of fish in three minutes," Kamel Khairallah, a fisherman.

"You throw the troobine over the side and quickly lie on your back to absorb the shock of the blast. It can harm your stomach," said Mr. Assaf, "or you can throw it from the beach."

The fishermen, who never use troobines at night for fear of being spotted by local authorities or the Israelis, say the lack of state authority is behind the widespread use of dynamite.

A government ban on dynamiting has done little to curb it, although fishermen admit it is depleting stocks. The penalty of up to six months' imprisonment is rarely imposed.

A Lebanese navy boat enforced the ban until a few months ago when it was pulled out of Tyre.

"It's a state of chaos now. There are no patrols to stop troobines so we are blasting. When the state prevents troobine use, we go back to using nets," said Mr. Assaf, 23.

By Feisal Samath
Reuters

COLOMBO — Nearly a year after becoming a makeshift replacement as Sri Lankan president, mild-mannered Dingiri Banda Wijetunga is proving people wrong about his intentions.

Some Sri Lankans expected him to be non-controversial, others believed he would remain in the background, like before, and do little talking. Both theories were wrong.

The silver-haired Wijetunga has emerged as a tough-talking, no-nonsense president, steeping himself in controversy and not giving an inch to his rivals.

"People who thought he would be a sleeping president have now woken up to the fact that he can't be taken lightly and is in fact tougher than his predecessors," a veteran journalist said.

The 72-year-old Wijetunga has angered Tamils with uncompromising views on the island's ethnic conflict, surprised many by bringing back former powerful ruling party politicians and a top opposition defector and shocked some by deciding to remain in power.

When Mr. Wijetunga, then prime minister, replaced Ranasinghe Premadasa, who was killed in a bomb attack last May, political analysts said he was a mere stop-gap president.

But the analysts are no longer surprised by the change.

"It is a good illustration of what happens to a village rustic when he strays into an upper-class environment. He loses all sense of direction and balance," said Hector Abhayawardene, a noted political commentator.

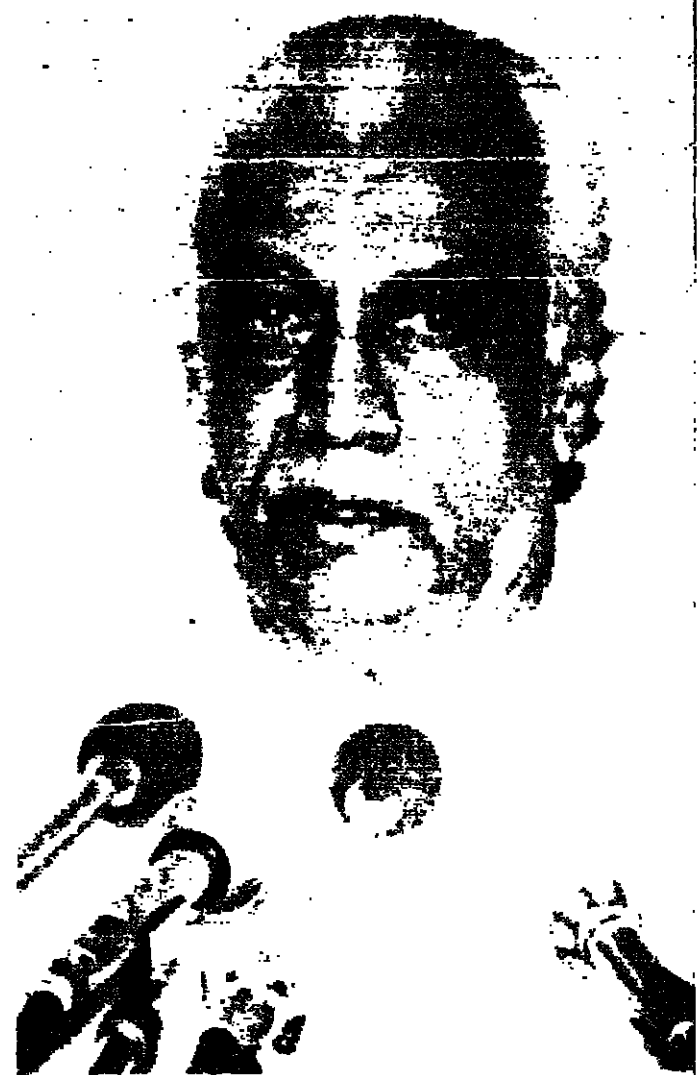
"He then becomes the victim of every conflicting pressure," the analyst said.

But the president, who grew up in a village in the central Kandyan hills and worked as a cooperatives inspector before moving into politics, has still charmed many.

"He is truly the leader we have been looking for, for a long time," said Gaman Jayasuriya, a former minister leading a campaign for the rights of the majority Sinhalese community.

Businessmen praise him for deftly handling a potentially serious crisis after Mr. Premadasa was killed. "He brought things under control, cooled passions and assured foreign investors that economic reforms would continue," an economist said.

A CONTROVERSIAL STRONGMAN: "People who thought (Dingiri Wijetunga) would be a sleeping president have now woken up to the fact that he can't be taken lightly and is in fact tougher than his predecessor," a veteran journalist.



Tough talks the president

Unlike his predecessors, Mr. Wijetunga believes he can win the next presidential poll purely on the Sinhalese vote and that could be his undoing, a political-science professor said.

In wooing Sinhalese hard-liners who say the Tamils have been given too much, Mr. Wijetunga has pandered to extremist elements and in the process hurt the minorities who have always supported the ruling United National Party (UNP) government, political observers said.

The president says there is no ethnic conflict and only a terrorist problem, a view scorned by Tamils who say discrimination against them by the Sinhalese-dominated government continues. They want the power to rule their own affairs.

Another Wijetunga statement that drew fire was his remark that the needs of the majority must be looked after before those of the minorities, who form 26 per cent of Sri Lanka's 17 million

people.

"The majority Sinhalese community is like a tree and the minorities are creepers," he told a public rally.

That probably led to most of the minorities voting against the ruling party in March 1 local council polls in the east, which has a mixed population of Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims.

"The humiliating defeat of the UNP (in minority-dominated areas) is a cogent message from the Tamil-speaking people that they are not under any circumstances prepared to live as creepers which have to cling and grow round a tree for their survival," said Tamil politician Dharmalingam Sithadthan.

Mr. Wijetunga has invited Tamil rebels, fighting since 1983 for a Tamil homeland, for talks. But at the same time he says there is nothing to talk about because minority issues have been resolved.

Neelan Tiruchelvam, director of the International Centre for Ethnic Studies, says the president's views are

consistent with his instinctive understanding of the ethnic problem, a rural view projected by Sinhalese hard-liners.

This view says there is no ethnic problem. The solution to the rebellion is a military one and the Sinhalese have been fairly generous to the minorities, Mr. Tiruchelvam said.

The biggest surprise to many is his determination to stay in power, despite once saying he was prepared to shed most of the wide-ranging powers enjoyed by the president.

Mr. Wijetunga, seen as an impartial president at the beginning, is now wheeling and dealing like his predecessors.

He has brought back former powerful UNP politicians to boost his own image, weakened the opposition by splitting their ranks and infuriated the public by pardoning two UNP supporters, facing shooting charges, on the grounds the victim was not pressing charges.

U.S. condemns attacks in northern Iraq, blames Baghdad

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States on Tuesday strongly condemned recent attacks against U.N. personnel and journalists in northern Iraq, and suggested the Iraqi government may be responsible.

State Department spokesman Mike McCurry said the attacks follow reports received by the United Nations that Iraq has offered a bounty for anyone who murders U.N. and other international relief

workers.

The most recent incident was the April 3 murder of Lissy Schmidt, 35, a German correspondent for the French news agency, Agence France-Presse. She and her Iraqi-Kurdish bodyguard were shot to death, apparently at point-blank range while travelling by road in northern Iraq, Mr. McCurry said.

Mr. McCurry said the incident was preceded by two separate attacks in March on

U.N. guard forces in which two Czech nationals and two Austrians were injured by gunfire in northern Iraq. In addition, two Swedish journalists were wounded last month in a car-bomb explosion in the north.

If reports of the monetary inducements and Iraqi involvement in the acts themselves are true, they would "constitute blatant violations of the terrorism provisions of the United Nations Security Council re-

solutions," Mr. McCurry said. He added that the bounty reportedly was raised to \$10,000 on March 1.

"The United States is working closely with the United Nations on security to prevent further attacks and to explore possible Iraqi government involvement in these incidents, Mr. McCurry said.

Northern Iraq is a Kurdish-dominated hotbed of senti-

ment against President Saddam Hussein. It has been essentially autonomous for the past three years and relies heavily on the United Nations for its survival. A ban on Iraqi military flights in the region is enforced by U.S., British and French warplanes based in Turkey.

Mr. McCurry said the incidents may have been provoked by Iraq's anger over the refusal of the United Nations to lift

sanctions against Iraq.

The recent events reflect "a frustrated and isolated Saddam Hussein who continues to face pressure from the international community in the form of the sanctions," Mr. McCurry said.

Three weeks ago, Iraq demanded that U.N. sanctions be lifted and warned of retaliatory action if they were not. On March 15, the Security Council continued the sanctions for another two months.

APRIL 1994

The National Music Conservatory / Noor Al Hussein Foundation

THE FIRST QUARTET FESTIVAL IN JORDAN

Monday, 11

THE JON METZGER JAZZ QUARTET

Philadelphia Hotel - Philadelphia Ballroom

JD 7

In cooperation with The American Center

Tickets are available from:

- The American Center, 820101
- Philadelphia Hotel, 607100
- Friday For Music, 682696
- The National Music Conservatory, 687620
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Wednesday, 13

EDINBURGH QUARTET

The Royal Cultural Centre - Main Theatre

JD 7

In cooperation with Shell Chemicals and Turino

Tickets are available from:

- The Royal Cultural Centre, 686026
- Turino, 818880
- Babiche, 661322
- Friday For Music, 682696
- The National Music Conservatory, 687620
- Romero Restaurant, Tel. 644227

Sunday, 17

Under the Patronage of His Highness Prince Raad Bin Zeid

THE MODERN STRING QUARTET

The Royal Cultural Centre - Main Theatre

JD 7

In cooperation with Goethe Institut and Friendship Society for the Blind

Tickets are available from:

- Philadelphia Hotel, 607100
- Goethe Institut, 641993
- Babiche, 661322
- Friday For Music, 682696
- The Royal Cultural Centre, 686026
- The National Music Conservatory, 687620
- Romero Restaurant, Tel. 644227

Tuesday & Wednesday, 26 & 27

THE MOZARTEUM QUARTET OF SALZBURG

HOTEL INTER. CONTINENTAL JORDAN THE GRAND BALLROOM

JD 25 (with dinner)

In cooperation with The Austrian Embassy

Tickets are available from:

- Hotel Inter. Continental Jordan, 641361

S. African leaders oppose delay of Natal vote; death toll soars

JOHANNESBURG (Agencies) — The death toll in Natal province soared to more than 100 Wednesday despite a six-day-old state of emergency, but political leaders rejected the idea of delaying voting in the region.

The latest police report on political deaths in Natal put the toll at 111 since Thursday as the Zulu stronghold experienced one of its worst surges in factional fighting in years.

A committee representing the South African government, Zulu nationalists and the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), which is organising national elections on April 26-28, concluded Tuesday it was not possible to hold fair elections in Natal when the rest of the country goes to polls.

The province, which includes the Zulu homeland of KwaZulu, has been under a state of emergency since Thursday to quell political violence between pro- and anti-election forces. Violence has increased in the run-up to the national election — the first to include South Africa's black majority — as Zulu nationalists demanding sovereignty try to block voting in their strongholds.

There has been speculation political leaders will delay the vote in Natal while allowing the country's three other provinces to vote on April 26-28.

But Judge Johann Kriegler, the head of the IEC, said Wednesday the political climate, not the election date, needed changing. African National Congress (ANC) President Nelson Mandela and Constitutional Development Minister Roelf Meyer agreed. "As far as I'm concerned, that would not be a viable option," Mr. Meyer said of a possible delay in Natal voting. "We would run into constitutional problems... we would run into political problems as far as the tensions that would flow from such a decision," he said on Radio 702, a Johannesburg station.

Earlier, Mr. Mandela told the radio the state of emergency must be given more time to take effect before a delay is considered. "It's premature to regard the declaration of the state of emergency as a failure," he said in response to callers on a phone-in show. "I think we should be patient and give the security forces more time to mobilise."

His comments were surprisingly conciliatory given the ANC's earlier pressures on President F.W. de Klerk to crack down in Natal. Mr. de Klerk ordered the state of emergency after demands from the ANC, which accuses KwaZulu police and some South African Security forces of instigating violence in Natal.

ANC officials in Natal have complained the emergency declaration has failed to provide adequate security for black township residents, and police Wednesday outlined a week of random shootings, stabbings, burnings and mayhem across the vast province.

At least 300 people died in Natal in March, and thousands have been killed there since the war between supporters of the ANC and the Zulu-dominated Inkatha Freedom Party began in the mid-1980s.

The report Tuesday said peaceful and fair elections would be impossible in Natal in the current political climate. It cited the "high level" of political intolerance and fear; large-scale intimidation; the failure of KwaZulu authorities to assist in free and fair elections; and the inability of South African police to protect the entire region during elections.

A summit is planned Friday involving the key players in the controversy — Mr. Mandela, Mr. de Klerk, Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini, and KwaZulu Chief Minister Mangosuthu Buthelezi. Mr. Buthelezi and King Goodwill oppose the election on grounds it will lead to the extinction of KwaZulu and — they say — of the Zulu culture.

The ANC is expected to win the vote and plans to eliminate all tribal homelands, including KwaZulu, and create a unitary state where all ethnic groups live as one.

Meanwhile, former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger said Tuesday he wanted the ANC and the Inkatha Freedom Party to make a "huge effort" at conciliation before he and Britain's Lord Carrington arrive in South Africa on a mediation mission.

Mr. Kissinger, in an interview with Cable News Network in New York, said mediation will not begin until after Mr. Buthelezi, King Goodwill, Mr. Mandela and President De Klerk meet Friday.

"What they should do is make a huge effort to narrow their differences before we get there," Mr. Kissinger is quoted as saying in a partial transcript of the CNN interview. "We're going there to facilitate we're not there as principals."

Mr. Kissinger said he and Lord Carrington are expected to begin their visit to South Africa on April 12 and end it on April 22. He rejected any suggestion that he and Lord Carrington will take an outline of an agreement with them.

"No. That would be a disaster. We can narrow the differences they define. We cannot substitute for them."



A South African policeman tries to persuade a Zulu to give up his spear. Zulus consider spears and clubs to be traditional weapons and are defying the state of emergency regulations banning such weapons (AFP photo)

North Korea opens parliament against nuclear crisis backdrop

TOKYO (R) — North Korean President Kim Il-Sung opened the spring session of the Stalinist nation's rubber-stamp parliament Wednesday against a backdrop of deepening crisis over Pyongyang's suspected nuclear ambitions.

Mr. Kim's chosen heir, eldest son Kim Jong-Il, also attended the inaugural session of the Supreme People's Assembly, the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported.

KCNA monitored in Tokyo, said the agenda included a report on the cash-strapped nation's economic performance, approval of the fiscal 1994 state budget and formal endorsement of laws previously approved by the assembly's standing committee.

Unmentioned in the brief despatch was the alarmist situation set out Tuesday in an apocalyptic KCNA despatch that warned of gathering war clouds and a scenario closely resembling the days before the Korean War broke out in 1950.

"A touch-and-go situation is prevailing on the Korean peninsula in which a war may break out any moment," the official agency said.

The atmosphere in North East Asia, increasingly tense over the past year as North Korea blocked full U.N. inspection of its nuclear facilities, took another turn for the worse last Thursday. That was when the U.N. Security Council issued a formal statement urging Pyongyang to allow unfettered checks.

The North Monday denounced the statement, accusing the Council of dancing to America's tune.

In Tuesday's despatch, KCNA gave a stark warning that all the factors needed to spark another conflict in Korea were falling into place.

The agency said the United States was planning to stage provocative large-scale war games, deploy Patriot missiles in the South and ship in additional U.S. troops and weapons, purportedly to counter a North Korean "attack."

With these and a string of other ominous developments, the agency said, "facts tell that the situation on the Korean peninsula resembles that on the eve of the past Korean War."

Later Tuesday, the U.S. Defence Department confirmed that the United States and South Korea were likely to hold their joint Team Spirit war games this year because of North Korea's continuing refusal to allow inspection of its nuclear sites to determine whether weapons-grade plutonium is being secretly diverted.

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Group completes London to New York drive

NEW YORK (R) — An international team Tuesday completed a 15,600 mile (25,000 km) driving expedition that took them across three continents and some of the world's most severe weather from London to New York in three months. The four women and seven men, who had braved the winter snows of Siberia and Alaska, were spared the harrowing ordeal of New York traffic by a special police convoy that accompanied them the last few miles of the journey into Manhattan. "We had cab drivers swearing and waving their fists," team member Dion Jerling told friends at a ceremony welcoming them to the United Nations. "Did they have their guns out?" asked a friend. The team, led by British television producer Richard Cressy, avoided any major mishaps through the three-month journey, which took them through the worst of the Russian winter with temperatures as low as 75 degrees below zero (minus 60 Celsius). Most of their journey, which began in London on December 27, 1993, was in two Ford Mondeo, four-wheel drive trucks built by Ford in Europe, accompanied by six Ford Mavericks. The group got special permission to drive through the Channel Tunnel, making the dream of driving from London to New York a possibility for the first time.

Missouri voters reject riverboat gambling

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (R) — Missouri voters narrowly rejected a referendum to legalise riverboat gambling Tuesday, just 16 months after approving floating casinos on the state's two major waterways — the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers. With 85 per cent of the vote counted statewide, the gambling measure was failing 52 per cent to 48 per cent. Missourians had last gone to the polls to consider riverboat gambling in November 1992, when 62 per cent of the voters approved the measure to legalise gambling in the state. However, another vote became necessary after the Missouri Supreme Court ruled earlier this year that the state constitution prohibits some forms of gambling. Those games include games of chance, such as craps or slot machines, which are among the biggest money makers for gaming companies. Gambling supporters, although stung by the loss at the polls, said they will work to put the issue before Missouri voters as early as August. With tens of millions of dollars already invested in the state to support a riverboat gambling industry, stock analysts had forecast a high stakes gamble with the biggest losers on a no vote being small-capitalised companies, such as Argosy Gaming Co., Station Casinos Inc., and President Riverboat Casinos Inc. Gambling supporters blamed low voter turnout due to a spring snowstorm for the loss.

Miniskirts raise wrath in African town

NIAMEY (R) — Attackers believed to be Islamic militants assaulted young women wearing miniskirts and sporting braided hairstyles in the central Niger town of Maradi, state-run radio reported. It said groups of zealots roamed streets and marketplaces smashing broths and beating women they considered immodestly dressed but did not say how many women were hurt or the extent of their injuries. Authorities in the town, 650 kilometres east of Niamey, said they would find and severely punish the attackers, who rampaged over two days.

Cows may step out in fluorescent leggings

LONDON (R) — Environmentalists want to fit cows in a British village with fluorescent leggings to stop them being hit by cars. Under a law dating from the middle ages, farmers are allowed to graze their animals on Westwood pasture in the northeast English county of Humberside, but nearly 40 cows have been killed and many more injured by cars in the last two years when they wander from the pasture on to busy roads. Environmentalists are asking residents to adopt a cow in return for a three-pound (\$4.50) fee which will be used to buy yellow and white leggings that show up in car headlights.

Clinton 'has been subjected to false charges'

CHARLOTTE, NC. (R) — President Bill Clinton said Tuesday he had been falsely accused in the Whitewater controversy and the American people should trust him and get "a little perspective" on the affair.

Mr. Clinton gave a testy defence when two people questioned him during a televised town hall meeting about the tangle of financial and ethical dealings dogging his presidency.

"I have been the subject, sir, of false charges," he told one man from Bristol, Tennessee who listed what he said were Mr. Clinton's broken campaign promises on taxes and foreign policy and then asked him why people should believe in his credibility on the Whitewater saga.

"People saying things about me that are not true don't make my credibility an issue. That makes their credibility an issue, not mine," the president said.

"I think you ought to trust me," Mr. Clinton said. "You are free to disagree with me but disagreement is different from trust. We ought not to

mix apples and oranges."

Earlier a soft-spoken young woman from Charlotte had also asked Mr. Clinton about Whitewater, telling him many Americans were "having a hard time with your credibility" because of the controversy and the reports that first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton turned a \$1,000 stake into a \$100,000 profit in the commodities markets 15 years ago.

"How can you earn back our trust?" the unidentified woman asked plaintively. "What we need is a little perspective here," the president said.

Mr. Clinton said that his wife had taken risks in her commodities trading in 1978-79, lost money as well as made it and "it's just not true" that she got preferential treatment at the markets.

"No one has accused us of doing anything illegal. We were attacked for losing money, we've been attacked for making money," Mr. Clinton said.

Answering the only question on foreign policy, Mr. Clinton said he had "a lot of options

short of the military option" to derail North Korea's fledgling nuclear weapons programme, but suggested that he would rely mainly on economic pressure.

Mr. Clinton said he believes financial markets are overreacting to recent interest rate increases by the Federal Reserve, the U.S. central bank.

"I do think that the markets are overreacting to what the Fed did. I hope that they will settle down. I hope the stock market will settle down. I hope the interest rates will go back down," Mr. Clinton said.

The townhall meeting was broadcast by several NBC television affiliates.

President Clinton said that America's medical problems were getting "lost in a cloud of hot air" from lobbyists opposing his health care plan.

He toured Montgomery Memorial Hospital in Troy, some 60 miles east of Charlotte, North Carolina, as part of a blitz of administration activity to promote his reform plan before Congress returns from a recess next week.

Russia still wants special status in NATO scheme

MOSCOW (R) — President Boris Yeltsin made clear in an interview published Wednesday that Russia is still insisting on special status in NATO's partnership for peace military cooperation programme.

He told Interfax News Agency Moscow planned to sign a "framework" agreement soon but said NATO's relationship with Russia should "by its scale and intensity have a different character" from that with other countries.

"We have in mind a special agreement with NATO, corresponding to the position and role of Russia in world and European affairs, to our country's military might and nuclear status," Mr. Yeltsin said.

A senior Foreign Ministry official said Tuesday he expected Russia to sign up for the programme on April 21, joining the 14 states from the former Soviet Bloc which have already done so.

Mr. Yeltsin's insistence on special status seemed intended to defuse criticism from some nationalist and conservative politicians that Russian participation would be demeaning.

Mr. Yeltsin said Russia was acting "without haste and had consulted other member-states of the Commonwealth of former Soviet republics."

had repaid by 1991.

The opposition Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) said it suspects the money was used illicitly to fund Mr. Hosokawa's successful bid for election as governor of Kumamoto, in southern Japan, in February 1993.

They are holding the budget hostage to push demands that Mr. Hosokawa produce receipts proving he repaid the Sagawa money, and that he allow his former aide in charge of finances to testify in parliament on the affair.

LDP lawmakers also want a financial consultant to appear before parliament to clear up doubts about a cheap loan Mr. Hosokawa is said to have received in 1986 that enabled him to make a huge profit on a new share issue.

LDP Secretary General Yoshiro Mori said it was only a matter of time before Mr. Hosokawa actually did step down.

"I think he really did say he wants to quit because it's about time for him to go," Mr. Mori said in television remarks.

"It's been our job to show that he was involved in some dubious affairs and now it's up to him to decide whether he'll resign or dissolve parliament for elections," he said.

Hosokawa's 'I quit' remark sparks furor

TOKYO (R) — Japan's embattled Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa denied Wednesday he had even uttered in jest the words "I quit," but his disclaimer failed to quash speculation that his days as leader were numbered.

Mr. Hosokawa's inability to shake off allegations of shady financial deal-making in the 1980s has damaged his reputation as an anti-corruption warrior, paralysed parliament and prompted the opposition to call for his resignation.

The Japanese news media, increasingly sceptical of Mr. Hosokawa's account of his past deals, went into a frenzy after two independent lawmakers revealed that Mr. Hosokawa had joked about quitting over dinner Tuesday.

But Wednesday, the "joke" was headline news in most of Japan's top dailies and the main item on television talk shows.

"I never said anything about quitting," a smiling Hosokawa told reporters Wednesday. "I said absolutely nothing that could have been taken to mean I would resign."

to power last August on promises of stamping out rampant official graft.

"I was drinking with the two lawmakers last night... But I didn't say I wanted to resign. Nor did the thought cross my mind," Mr. Hosokawa told JNP lawmakers, according to news reports.

Masayoshi Takemura, the chief government spokesman, who recently had a falling out with Mr. Hosokawa, was less than supportive Wednesday.

"The prime minister must have made a remark that could be linked to resigning," he told a news conference. "He must be more careful about making remarks that could give rise to misunderstandings."

Mr. Takemura said also it was time for the ruling coalition to consider the opposition's demands that Mr. Hosokawa allow a full probe of old loans to break a stalemate in parliament that has delayed passage of the nation's now overdue 1994-95 budget.

"We want to... take some action so that parliament can resume (the budget debate) by next week," he said.

Mr. Hosokawa has insisted the 100 million yen (\$980,000) he received in 1982 from Sagawa Kyubin, a trucking company involved in a 1992-93 payoff scandal, was a loan he

Chinese dissident's secretary also under probe

BEIJING (R) — China Wednesday appeared to be building a case against its most prominent dissident, Wei Jingsheng, with police confirming that his secretary is also being held in connection with suspected criminal activities.

A Public Security Ministry spokesman said the secretary, Tong Yi, was "being investigated for matters that violated the laws of China."

He declined to specify the charges that might be brought against Mr. Wei and Mr. Tong, saying that nothing can be revealed until investigations are completed.

Mr. Tong, who maintained close relations with the foreign press in Beijing, has not been heard from since China announced Tuesday that Mr. Wei was being "interrogated and placed under surveillance... because he violated the law on many occasions and is suspected of having committed new crimes when he was deprived of his political rights and on parole."

Mr. Wei, known as the father of China's modern Democracy Movement, was paroled in September after serving 14½ years of 15-year jail sentence.

The 43-year-old activist was grabbed by police Friday while returning to Beijing from the nearby port of Tianjin and had not been seen since by relatives or colleagues.

Mr. Wei's sister, Wei Ling, said Wednesday that police had told her father the activist would be held "for a time". They rejected the father's request to see his son, saying that any family visits would have to wait.

Wei Ling said a squad of police had raided Mr. Wei's office Monday, presumably looking for evidence against him.

The report of Mr. Wei's renewed detention sparked diplomatic moves by the U.S. government, which said it appeared to be a case of silencing a citizen merely for his views.

But China Wednesday told the rest of the world to mind its own business, saying the Wei case was purely internal and was being handled according to the law.

In Washington, State Department spokesman Mike McCurry said: "The United States very much regrets that China has taken this step."

British colonial government than China questioned whether Xi Yang, a journalist with the Hong Kong daily Ming Pao, had really been spying, for which he was convicted last week.

Mr. McCurry took issue with the Chinese view that Mr. Wei had violated laws, saying "to the best of our knowledge, Mr. Wei has only exercised his universally recognised right to freedom of opinion and expression... The only thing he has done is to express opinions about conditions that exist within China."

A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman, asked if the Wei affair would affect Sino-U.S. relations, made clear Beijing felt it should not.

The Public Security Department has the right to interrogate him according to the law and this is purely China's internal affair," she said.

Navratilova breaks slump with Amelia Island win

AMELIA ISLAND, Florida (R) — Third seed Martina Navratilova won her first match in three weeks on Tuesday and she did it in convincing fashion.

Navratilova, who had lost her opening match the past two weeks, crushed Veronika Martinek of Germany 6-1 6-1 in the second round of the 400,000 Bausch Lomb championships. The fourth-ranked future Hall of Famer, who received a first-round bye, had not lost her opening match in consecutive tournaments since 1974 until last week at Hilton Head.

"I didn't want to lose three in a row," said the relieved nine-time Wimbledon champion, who has won this tournament three times.

"I was very focused today. I'm very excited about winning the match. It was a big bump for me to get over," Navratilova admitted.

After also receiving first-round byes, top seed Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, her second-seeded Spanish compatriot Conchita Martinez and fourth seed Gabriela Sabatini all saw their first action Tuesday and all fared well on the Amelia Island clay.

The second-ranked Sanchez, the defending champion who is looking for her first title of the

year, cruised past Ruxandra Dragomir of Romania 6-1 6-2 in 76 minutes.

Martinez, winner of last week's Family Circle Cup, needed just 65 minutes to dispose of Petra Ritter of Austria by the same score.

Sabatini, a three-time winner of this event who is hoping to end a 32-tournament title drought, took a 6-3 6-4 decision from Janette Husárová of Slovakia.

"I haven't had too many good results lately, so that probably helps them more," Sabatini said of her opponents.

"If I want to win I have to beat everybody," added the Argentine, who has not won a title since the Italian Open in May 1992.

Navratilova's determination was obvious as she dismantled Martinez in just 55 minutes despite playing on her least favorite surface.

The former world number one, who has played just 11 clay court events in the last five years, appeared unusually comfortable moving around the court against her 108th-ranked opponent.

She lost a total of just 12 points in her seven service games and was able to work her way into the net for winning volleys.

Heat cool off Knicks to end 15-game winning streak

MIAMI (R) — The Miami heat cooled off the sizzling hot Knicks on Tuesday with a 100-86 romp that ended New York's 15-game winning streak.

Harold Miner scored six of his game-high 22 points during a 13-2 surge to open the fourth quarter as Miami handed the Knicks their first loss since Feb. 27. The 15-game streak was the second longest in franchise history and tied Houston for the longest winning streak in the league this season.

Steve Smith added 20 points for Miami, which once again played without injured starting center Rony Seikaly.

Patrick Ewing scored 19 points and 11 rebounds to pace New York, which still boasts the best record in the Eastern Conference at 51-20.

Miami, clinging to the seventh playoff spot in the east, won for just the second time in its last nine games.

At New Jersey, Jayson Williams scored 13 of his career-high 19 points in the second quarter as the Nets built a 15-point halftime lead and cruised to a 120-94 win over the Boston Celtics.

Williams, who played just 27 minutes, also had seven rebounds, Benoit Benjamin and Kevin Edwards added 14 points apiece and Kenny Anderson chipped in 12 points and 17 assists for New Jersey.

The Nets led by as many as 30 points in the fourth quarter and Boston got no closer than 15 in the second half.

At Cleveland, John Williams scored eight points in a decisive 11-1 fourth quarter run as the Cavaliers beat the Charlotte Hornets 105-99.

The Cavaliers have never lost to the Hornets at home in 13 meetings at the Richfield Coliseum.

Williams had 23 points and Rod Higgins scored 12 points for the Cavs to their fifth win in six

games. Charlotte fell 5½ games behind New Jersey in the race for the final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference.

In Orlando, Jeff Turner scored a season-high 22 points and grabbed 10 rebounds as the magic downed the Milwaukee Bucks, 104-97 despite the absence of Shaquille O'Neal, who sat out with a stomach virus.

Anfernee Hardaway added 21 points and nine assists as Orlando handed Milwaukee its 10th straight road loss.

Turner scored eight points in the first quarter as Orlando jumped to a 32-19 lead and never looked back.

In Chicago, Scottie Pippen led six Chicago players in double figures with 22 points as the Bulls pummeled the Washington Bullets 114-88.

The Bulls broke the game open with a 13-4 run at the start of the second half and coasted to their fifth consecutive win and eighth straight at home. Chicago has won its last 15 meetings with the Bullets.

B.J. Armstrong scored 17 points and Horace Grant added 16 for Chicago. Calbert Cheaney scored 19 points and Rex Chapman is for the Bullets, who last beat the Bulls in December 1992.

In San Antonio, Latrell Sprewell scored six of his 26 points in the last two minutes to help the Golden State Warriors rally to a 106-101 win over the Spurs.

Chris Webber added 21 points and Billy Owens 20 for the Warriors.

David Robinson had 29 points and Dennis Rodman 19 rebounds for the Spurs, who saw their six-game winning streak end.

At Indiana, Antonio Davis scored 11 of his 18 points during a 19-7 second-quarter spurt as the Pacers built an 18-point cushion and held on for a 105-89 victory over the Detroit

Pistons.

Dale Davis added 19 points and 14 rebounds and Kenny Williams netted 18 points off the bench for the Pacers, who won for the fourth time in five games to maintain the sixth spot in the east playoff race.

Davis started in place of Indiana's leading scorer Rik Smith, who missed the game because of the flu.

In Denver, Elmore Spencer converted a three-point play with 42 seconds left to give the Los Angeles Clippers a 92-91 win over the Nuggets.

Denver had a chance to win the game in the closing seconds, but Robert Pack missed a jumper and Rodney Rogers missed the putback.

The Nuggets lost their fifth straight game, while the Clippers snapped a six-game losing streak.

Gary Grant scored 26 and Randy Woods added 20 to pace the Clippers. Dikembe Mutombo collected a triple-double for Denver with 11 points, 16 rebounds and 11 blocked shots.

In Seattle, Vincent Askew scored 11 of his 14 points in the fourth quarter to rally the SuperSonics to their ninth straight win, an 88-79 triumph over the Utah Jazz.

Askew scored all of Seattle's points in a 7-2 spurt midway through the fourth that gave the Sonics a 77-70 lead with 4:30 remaining.

Cliff Schrempf scored 17 points and Sam Perkins and Kemp added 15 each as Seattle won for the 14th time in 15 games.

Seattle's win increased the Sonics' lead to 3½ games over New York in the race for the best record in the NBA.

In Portland, Terry Porter scored 13 of his 17 points in a second quarter outburst as the Trail Blazers downed the Phoenix Suns 135-113.

Portland used a 19-5 run in the first five minutes of the second quarter to take a 48-41 lead. Porter hit three three-pointers in the quarter as Portland outscored Phoenix 40-21 in the second.

Clifford Robinson scored 23 points and Rod Strickland added 18 points and a team-record 20 assists for the Blazers. Charles Barkley scored 27 points to pace Phoenix.

Jordan's participation in Asian Games limited to five sports

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan has selected only five sports for its participation in the Asian Games in Hiroshima, Japan, to open in October this year, according to Jordan Olympic Committee (JOC) President Muwaffaq Al Fawwaz.

Dr. Fawwaz said Jordan's participation will be limited to basketball, taekwondo, athletics, and boxing while a sixth sport, shooting, might be taken into consideration if members of the national team achieve good results in competitions that will take place in Egypt and Cyprus within the coming few days.

Dr. Fawwaz explained that the JOC had set certain criteria for Jordanian sports federations who want their teams to participate in the games.

These criteria, he said, stipulate that the national team for every sport will qualify to participate in Hiroshima only if it had at least occupied the eighth place in an Asian tournament or third in an Arab championship.

The Jordanian national basketball, taekwondo, karate, athletics, and boxing teams achieved such results in 1992 and therefore their applications to participate in Hiroshima were approved, he said.

He noted that the parti-

cipation of the shooting team hinges on whether its members would get 120 points in the Cairo and Cyprus championships, a result they have never achieved.

Another national team, the judo team, qualifies to participate in the Asian Games since it met the criteria set by JOC, but according to Dr. Fawwaz, most of the team members are suffering from injuries that would take till after October to heal.

Jordan's basketball team met the requirements to qualify for participation after it won second place in the Arab Basketball Championship held in Damascus in 1992 and placed sixth in the Asian Basketball Championship hosted by Hong Kong in 1993, while the national taekwondo team occupied the fifth place in the Asian championship held in January in Manila, Philippines.

The karate team came third in the Arab championship hosted by Cairo earlier this year. The athletics team won a gold medal in

addition to six silver and bronze medals to be placed third in the Arab Championship in Damascus in 1992, and in the same championship the boxing team secured third place.

According to Dr. Fawwaz, Jordan's best participation in the Asian Olympics was in the 1986 Seoul Games when the basketball team came fourth and the taekwondo players won three silvers and one bronze to place Jordan fourth in the standings.

In 1990, Jordan did not take part in the Asian Olympics hosted by China.

The JOC, which was established in 1958 and accredited by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), coordinates among Jordanian sports federations which want to participate in Asian and Olympic games.

Jordan's most popular game, soccer, is not going to be one of Jordan's entries in the games since Jordan's national team has not had good results in the last two years at the Asian and Asian Cup levels, Dr. Fawwaz said.

GOREN BRIDGE

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ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
What is your opening bid?
A.—We have no quarrel if you elect to open one club, intending to bid and rebid hearts. That, however, presumes you will have a free run in the auction and partner's response will not prove embarrassing. Since the hand is a tad weak for a reverse after one spade by partner, and the heart suit might get lost if the opponents compete, our choice of opening bid would be one heart to facilitate getting both suits into the auction.

Q.2—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
The bidding has proceeded:
1♣ Pass 2♥ Pass 3♦ Pass 4♠ Pass
What do you bid now?
A.—You have shown slam interest. Now it's time to set the trump suit. Bid three clubs. There is no need to do anything more dramatic because your jump shift was an unconditional game force.

Q.3—East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
The bidding has proceeded:
1♣ Pass 2♥ Pass 3♦ Pass 4♠ Pass
What do you bid now?
A.—You can't pass and a double of hearts in this situation would promise a six-card suit. The preference to two diamonds is a three-card support, not a double.

Q.4—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
Partner opens the bidding with a game-forcing bid of two spades. What do you respond?
A.—There's a textbook bid that fits this hand perfectly: A jump to four spades promises excellent trump support with no first- or second-round control in a side suit. It's your hand and your bid.

Q.5—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
Partner opens the bidding with one heart. What do you respond?
A.—Don't let those five hearts tempt you into doing something rash. Without the semblance of a winner outside the trump suit, you are worth no more than a raise to two hearts. Had you held a singleton somewhere, four hearts would have been more appealing.

Q.6—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
Partner opens the bidding with one heart. What do you respond?
A.—There's a textbook bid that fits this hand perfectly: A jump to four spades promises excellent trump support with no first- or second-round control in a side suit. It's your hand and your bid.

Q.7—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
Partner opens the bidding with one heart. What do you respond?
A.—There's a textbook bid that fits this hand perfectly: A jump to four spades promises excellent trump support with no first- or second-round control in a side suit. It's your hand and your bid.

Q.8—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♥ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♦ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
♣ A J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2
Partner opens the bidding with one heart. What do you respond?
A.—There's a textbook bid that fits this hand perfectly: A jump to four spades promises excellent trump support with no first- or second-round control in a side suit. It's your hand and your bid.

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Serbs block U.N. general from Gorazde, press assault

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — Bosnian Serbs stopped the U.N. commander from visiting Gorazde on Wednesday, but their advance into the besieged Muslim enclave appeared to slow.

Lieutenant-General Michael Rose's attempt to personally assess the situation in the eastern enclave came after Serb troops broke through outer defence lines and fought their way to within a few kilometres of the town of Gorazde itself. Hundreds of civilians reportedly fled burning villages on the outskirts of the enclave.

It was unclear why Gen. Rose did not proceed beyond Pale, the Serb headquarters just southeast of Sarajevo. He told reporters Serb officials cited "security reasons."

But three U.N. military observers and eight British liaison officers were allowed to proceed, U.N. officials said.

A spokesman, Major Rob Annink said it was decided at Pale it would be "illogical" for Gen. Rose to insist on going to Gorazde when the liaison officers could report back to him.

On the second anniversary of the outbreak of the Bosnian war, Maj. Annink also said U.N. officials had received an "important" proposal from Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic for a general ceasefire in Bosnia. He gave no details.

Serbs and the Muslim-led government have mostly observed a truce around Sarajevo since Feb. 10, but fighting has continued elsewhere in the former Yugoslav republic.

Maj. Annink said earlier that the Serb attack towards the town of Gorazde, 55 kilometres southeast of Sarajevo, had halted after running into entrenched defences. "Our assessment is that

Gorazde is not in danger of falling," he said. "It is very well defended."

Bosnian government radio said Serbs continued to assault government troops defending the enclave.

The Yugoslav news agency Tanjug, citing a Bosnian Serb military statement, said Serb troops had occupied the village of Biljin, four kilometres south of Gorazde, and were fighting to "liberate Serb villages" in the area.

The Gorazde enclave is about 20 kilometres long and 15 kilometres wide, divided by the Drina River. The area is home to an estimated 65,000 people, many of the refugees.

With Serb forces reported to have made major advances towards the town, a U.N. spokesman said 12 people including three children had been killed and 52 people wounded over the past 24 hours.

The casualties were reported as Bosnia marked the second anniversary of the war, which most consider broke out when Serb guns shelled nearby Sarajevo on April 6, 1992.

The casualty toll in Gorazde since the latest Serb assault began on March 29 was now 64 killed, including 10 children, and 301 wounded, including 36 children, said Peter Kessler, spokesman to the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

He said UNHCR staff in Gorazde had confirmed 1,000 people had been displaced from outlying villages by the fighting, which had brought the Serbs to within about three kilometres from the town centre.

The United Nations said Bosnian Serb forces had on Tuesday advanced up to 10

kilometres into the Gorazde pocket.

But Bosnian Serb advances from the east and north east had been halted and the Muslim forces still held crucial high ground which the Serbs would need to take if they wanted to advance further, according to Maj. Annink.

The United States said the fall of Gorazde would be a setback for the peace process in Bosnia.

But in the face of calls from the Bosnian government for international action to stop the assault, America's top general ruled out using the threat of air strikes to break the siege, as happened in Sarajevo.

"Right now, it is our judgment that conditions in Gorazde do not lend themselves to the use of air power," General John Shalikashvili, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, told a news conference on Tuesday.

But he said the situation could change, and "if the conditions are right, we will use air power to mitigate the behaviour of the Serbs."

Bosnian radio reported Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic had sent a letter to the U.N. Security Council to remind them of Resolution 824, which declared Gorazde a U.N.-protected area a year ago.

In Moscow, Russia's State Duma (lower house) voted on Wednesday to debate lifting economic sanctions against ramp Yugoslavia while hard-line deputies accused the United Nations of encouraging "genocide" against Serbs.

Deputy Speaker Alexander Vengerovsky told a news conference Russia should stop backing U.N. sanctions against Yugoslavia and recognise Serb-controlled regions of Croatia and Bosnia.

Blackmun retires

WASHINGTON (AP) — Justice Harry A. Blackmun, author of the landmark Roe vs. Wade decision that legalised abortion nationwide 21 years ago, announced his retirement Wednesday.

"I shall miss the court, its work and its relationships," Mr. Blackmun said. "But I leave it in good hands." Mr. Blackmun said he had told President Bill Clinton of his plans several months ago, leaving the president plenty of time to consider a successor.

Mr. Blackmun, 85, said in a written statement that "I advised both the president and the chief justice some months ago that this would be my last term in active service on the court. I am now writing the president formally that I shall assume retirement status," when the court ends its 1993-94 term in late June, or when a successor is confirmed.

The departure of Mr. Blackmun gives Mr. Clinton his second opportunity to make a high court appointment. Mr. Clinton named Ruth Bader Ginsburg last year.

Early speculation Wednesday centred on Senate majority leader George Mitchell, or possibly Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt.

"The speculation in the senate is that Senator Mitchell is the clear favourite," Sen. Hank Brown, a judiciary committee member, said in an appearance on NBC Television. "As a matter of fact, it might have been a factor in his decision to leave the Senate."

Mr. Blackmun's high court tenure was marked by his role in the 1973 abortion decision and subsequent abortion rulings. His authorship of Roe vs. Wade made him one of the most vilified supreme court members in history, though he remains a hero to proponents of legalised abortion.

Hebron victims remembered

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Wednesday delegated Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali to attend a special ceremony held at the Khalil Al Rahman Society in Amman to mark 40 days since the massacre of dozens of Palestinian worshippers at the Ibrahim Mosque in Hebron. Speakers at the ceremony condemned the massacre as a "heinous crime."

"The blood of martyrs will always be a beacon lighting the way of the Palestinian people's struggle to regain their legitimate rights on their national soil," said a speaker.

Speakers also lauded Jordan's stands taken immediately following the massacre and affirmed the importance of preserving the

historic relations between Jordan and Palestinians.

Palestinian Ambassador to Jordan Al Tayyeb Abdul Rahim delivered an address on behalf of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat extolling the martyrs of the massacre and the sacrifices offered by the Palestinian people in their struggle to achieve their national rights.

Mr. Abdul Rahim said the Palestinians are now passing through a critical stage that requires them to be alert to regional and international developments.

"This battle of ours, as much as it needs solid national unity, it also needs the full support of the Arab and Islamic nations, as well as coordination among the Arab and Islamic countries," he said warning that the balance of power is not in

favour of the Palestinian side at the time being. He said national unity was now needed more than ever, especially that the Palestinians are now preparing to establish their state, with Jerusalem as its capital.

Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Taher Al Masri stressed in his address that the souls of the martyrs would know no rest until the goals they lived and died for were achieved. He stressed that massacres committed by the occupation authorities and the settlers would not achieve their malicious goals.

Upper House of Parliament member Kamel Al Sharif who delivered an address on behalf of Senate Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi said the Hebron massacre proves beyond doubt that co-existence with the Zionist movement is impossible.

Sudanese hijack ends in Luxor

CAIRO (Agencies) — A lone hijacker claiming he had a pistol and a bomb commandeered a Sudanese plane to the southern Egyptian resort of Luxor on Wednesday, then surrendered to Egyptian authorities.

Security officials at Cairo international airport said the Sudan Airways Boeing 727 was seized during a domestic flight from Khartoum to Dongola, a historic Nile River town 465 kilometres northwest of the capital. It carried 93 passengers, all Sudanese, and six crew members.

Salah Mohammad Ibrahim, press attaché at Sudan's embassy in Cairo, said the hijacker turned himself over to Egyptian authorities at Luxor. Mr. Ibrahim said all aboard were safe and that security officials at Luxor airport were inspecting the plane before allowing it to fly back to Sudan.

Mr. Ibrahim said he had no information about the hijacker except that he is "a young Sudanese" who was being interrogated by Egyptian officials.

Egypt's Middle East News Agency (MENA) reported that he requested political asylum at Luxor, and Cairo airport security officers con-

firmed that.

Mr. Ibrahim denied that, however, because he said political asylum is impossible in a relationship as close as Egypt's with Sudan. In truth, however, relations between the neighbours never have been worse since Sudan became independent in 1956. They have an active dispute over a border enclave at Egypt's southeastern corner, and Cairo claims Sudan's Islamic fundamentalist military government has trained extremists for action in Egypt.

It was unclear whether Wednesday's hijacking was related to the internal situation in Sudan. Southern rebels there have waged civil war against the government for the last 11 years, seeking more autonomy and a greater share of economic development.

Security officials said the hijacker ordered the pilot to divert the aircraft to Cairo airport. They said he threatened to blow up the plane with explosives and that he had a firearm.

Egyptian authorities refused to allow the plane to land in Cairo but directed it to Luxor, 530 kilometres south of the capital.

Officials at Luxor airport said none of the passengers and six crew on board the Sudan Air flight was injured. Abdullah Seif, deputy director of Luxor airport, identified the hijacker as Adel Mahjoub Hussein Mohammad Ahmad, 35.

The plane was on its way from Khartoum to the northern town of Dongola when the man threatened the pilot and told him to head for Cairo, airport sources said.

But Cairo airport refused to allow the plane to land and the plane touched down at the tourist resort of Luxor, about 400 kilometres north of the border with Sudan, at 8 a.m. (0600 GMT).

The hijacker surrendered about 90 minutes later.

Sudanese diplomats could not recall the last time a Sudanese plane was hijacked. Salah Ibrahim, press counsellor at the Sudanese embassy in Cairo, said most of the passengers on internal flights were Sudanese but no list was immediately available.

"We are still waiting for the crew to return to Khartoum to get more details. They are just refuelling now and will be on their way soon," he said.

IRA begins three-day truce

BELFAST, Northern Ireland (Agencies) — The Irish Republican Army (IRA) began a three-day ceasefire Wednesday aimed at pressuring the British government into talks with its political ally, Sinn Fein.

Many Belfast people are not expecting peace to break out or the IRA to extend its experimental truce — but suspect that the British would like to stitch up a secret deal with their enemies if they could get away with it.

The British and Irish governments in December offered Sinn Fein a place in talks if the IRA gave up its 24-year campaign. The street wisdom is that the three-day ceasefire is not nearly enough to swing that deal, but it's a start.

"Sure the British have been saying for a long time how much they'd like to be rid of Northern Ireland. The ceasefire is Sinn Fein's way of saying they want out of the stalemate too," said Conor Maguire, a Roman Catholic student at Queen's University in Belfast.

Peter Robinson, deputy leader of the Democratic Uni-

onist Party which is opposed to any steps towards reuniting Ireland, told reporters he was convinced the British government had contacted the IRA through an intermediary.

He said London had agreed to give the IRA and Sinn Fein the "clarification" they have demanded of last December's Anglo-Irish declaration which offered talks in return for a permanent end to insurrection.

But at a news conference in London, Sinn Fein spokesman Tom Hartley denied Mr. Robinson's claim, telling reporters: "I am not aware of any contact that the British government is having with Republicans at this point in time. Certainly they don't have any contact with Sinn Fein."

British Prime Minister John Major has dismissed the three-day truce as an inadequate and cynical gesture and publicly refused to talk.

But Mr. Robinson, echoing fears widespread throughout Northern Ireland's Protestant majority, said he believed a secret deal with the IRA would eventually be done.

"This prime minister is not a

prime minister who is going to stand up to the IRA," he said. "The government's programme is to end violence by surrendering to the IRA. That is what the declaration set out to do."

"I believe they are already having contact through an intermediary," Mr. Robinson said.

Britain admitted last year secret contacts with Sinn Fein had gone on for over two years but says they are over and will not be resumed.

Sinn Fein has urged Britain to treat the IRA ceasefire as a gesture of the utmost importance and use it to reestablish contact to clarify the declaration.

Mr. Robinson said he believed Sinn Fein was calling for higher-level, direct contacts with the British government.

Political observers say recognition from London, through face-to-face talks, is more important to Sinn Fein, which is supported by about 10 per cent of Northern Ireland's voters, than actual clarification of the declaration.

Fighting in south Somalia

MOGADISHU (Agencies) — Factional fighting has flared again in the coastal city of Merca less than two weeks before faction leaders are scheduled to open peace talks in Mogadishu.

U.N. military spokesman Asif Iqbal said Wednesday that General Mohammad Farah Aided's Somali National Alliance (SNA) militiamen fought in Merca again Tuesday with force of the southern Somali National Movement led by Abdi Warsame Isak.

He said a few people were killed before clan elders could end the fighting Tuesday night, but he could not give precise casualty figures. He said it was the latest in a series of clashes between the two factions over the past week in Merca, which is 96 kilometres south of Mogadishu.

No U.N. forces were involved in the fighting, said Mr. Iqbal.

The continuing clashes in Merca come after Somali faction leaders agreed last month in Nairobi to a ceasefire and to open peace talks in Mogadishu on April 15.

Algeria forces said to kill dozens in 'revenge raid'

PARIS (Agencies) — Algerian security forces killed dozens of suspected Muslim fundamentalists and left their bodies in the streets in a revenge raid on the Islamist stronghold of Blida two weeks ago, witnesses and diplomats said.

Paratroopers rounded up young men in night raids in a major operation to avenge murdered security men and to try to break the Islamists' control over the city, 50 kilometres south of Algiers, they said.

The reported killings appeared to illustrate a statement by Prime Minister Redha Malek last month that "fear must change sides," signalling a tougher crackdown on Islamist militants fighting to overthrow his army-backed government.

The outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), in a statement issued by exiled leaders in Blida alone at 82, a figure independent sources described as credible.

Witnesses and diplomats gave the following account of the operation, details of which first emerged in the French newspaper Liberation and Le Monde:

It began after a commercial strike called by Islamic groups in the city on March 19, during which guerrillas killed five para-military gendarmes and a policeman.

That night, paratroopers went from door to door, accompanied by hooded informers, rounding up suspected fundamentalists.

Fourteen men were found lying two-by-two with their throats slit on doorsteps and in the streets the following morning.

Le Monde quoted one witness who said he saw in the street the bodies of six young men — the youngest aged 18 — riddled with bullets and showing signs of torture.

A further 10 suspected Islamists were taken away the following night and found with their throats slit the next morning close to the city's sports stadium.

A spokesman for the Algerian president's office, contacted by telephone, had no immediate comment.

Diplomats and the Islamic opposition have reported a spate of attacks by secularist vigilantes they believe are linked to or a cover for the security forces.

COLUMN

Errant British aristocrat arrested... again

LONDON (R) — The heir one of the top aristocratic families in Britain was arrested in London Tuesday after he failed to turn up in court to answer the charges. Police said they arrested the wayward marquis, Jamie Blandford, in Wokingham. The former drug user and convicted drunk driver was picked up while sitting in a car with another man less than 24 hours after missing the court appearance. Judge Alan Blandford ordered police to arrest the 38-year-old heir to the Duke of Marlborough. Apart from charges of stealing a cheque book, Marquess Blandford also accused of running a car without paying a tax fee. The marquis, whose antics regularly feature in Britain's tabloid newspapers, has had several brushes with the law in the past few years, including offences of drugs possession. Earlier Tuesday, Marquess Blandford left his central London residence saying he had overslept and was on his way to court. But a court spokesman said he never arrived. In previous incidents he climbed down a drainpipe to avoid police. Marquess Blandford who stands to inherit the historic £100 million (\$150 million) Blenheim Palace estate when his father dies, recent spent three days in jail after failing to pay maintenance to his estranged wife and his son. Family friends of the 68-year-old duke are seeking legal powers to prevent his heir selling or leasing any of the 11.5 acre (4,650 hectare) estate when he inherits the title. Queen Anne gave Blenheim Palace, near Oxford, to the first Duke of Marlborough in 1705 as a reward for leading his armies to dazzling victory against France. The U.N. cultural body UNESCO has designated the palace, when Sir Winston Churchill was born, as one of nine world heritage sites in England.

Richest Taiwan man said to be worth \$6.1b

TAIPEI (R) — Insurance tycoon Tsai Wan-Lin remains Taiwan's richest man after raising his fortune to an estimated \$6.1 billion this year from \$5.5 billion last year. Excellent business magazine says in its April edition. Mr. Tsai, 70, heads the Cathay Insurance and Real-Estate Group, one of the island's biggest conglomerates. He has topped the magazine's annual list of Taiwan's richest men since 1990. W. Tung-Chin, 49, more than doubled his wealth to \$4.7 billion from \$2.3 billion in 1993 to replace plastics tycoon Wang Yang-Ching as the island's second richest man. Mr. Wu head of the Shin Kong Insurance and Textile Group, was Taiwan's third richest man last year, his fortune increased on the listing of his Shin Kong Life Insurance Company in the local stock market, the magazine said.

Archbishop calls Britain ordinary little nation

LONDON (R) — Britain's leading churchman says Britain is now an ordinary little country with a splintered society and a growing gap between rich and poor. "The kind of picture I'm describing is one of a fragmented, divided society which has lost its empire," Dr. George Carey, Archbishop of Canterbury and leader of the world's Anglicans, was quoted as saying by the Daily Telegraph Wednesday. "The Commonwealth doesn't really mean very much anymore," he said. "We're not quite yet Europeans and committed to it. We're in a very big world and we're very lonely. We have lost nearly all our navy and air force and so on. We're a pretty ordinary little nation and yet we don't realise it." The newspaper said Arch. Carey's remarks would appear in a 30-page interview in a book to be published in June. "We are a much more fragmented nation than we used to be and the class divisions are still pretty deep in society," Arch. Carey said. "There is a growing gap between rich and poor. Whatever people may say, that's the reality. The education system, which used to be second to none, is now pretty mediocre."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iraq denies responsibility for attacks

NICOSIA (AP) — Iraq on Wednesday denied it was responsible for recent attacks on foreigners in the north of the country, the Iraqi News Agency reported. The agency quoted a government spokesman as denying the "absurd accusation, which proves the extent to which the U.S. State Department misleads public opinion." State Department spokesman Mike McCurry suggested Tuesday that Baghdad may have been responsible for the attacks. He cited reports received by the United Nations that Iraq was offering a bounty for anyone who murdered U.N. and other international relief workers. U.N. convoys came under attack by unidentified men in two incidents in northern Iraq on Tuesday. One guard was seriously wounded, another suffered minor injuries. A German correspondent for Agence France-Presse, Lissy Schmidt, 35, and her Kurdish bodyguard were slain Sunday as they travelled by road in northern Iraq. In March, two Czechs and two Austrians were wounded by gunfire. Also last month, a Swedish journalist suffered facial injuries when the car he was travelling in was rocked by a bomb.

Police arrest suspect in Tunis killing

TUNIS (AP) — Tunisian police have arrested a Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) employee in connection with the killing of a colleague and on charges of illegally dealing in foreign currency. PLO sources said Wednesday. The sources said the suspect, identified only as Abu Khalid, was arrested in a police ambush Tuesday just before he could cross the border into Libya. On Saturday, Khalil Abu Moalek, an employee in the PLO's political department, was killed by a gunman at a shopping centre in a Tunis suburb. Abu Moalek, 33, was believed to have been part of network trafficking in forged currency in Tunisia, said the PLO sources. PLO officials acknowledged that Abu Khalid was being questioned in connection with the murder and also on charges of illegally dealing in foreign currency. Tunis has been hosting several hundred PLO employees since the organisation was expelled from Lebanon in 1982.

Exiled Haitian dictator cannot pay rent

PARIS (AP) — Once a symbol of excessive living, Haiti's exiled dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier has slunk out of his Riviera villa because he could not pay the rent, a newspaper reported Wednesday. Le Parisien reported that Mr. Duvalier's whereabouts are unknown since he left the sumptuous villa in February, being unable to come up with 800,000 francs (\$140,000) in annual rent. Mr. Duvalier, known as "Baby Doc" when he named himself president-for-life over Haiti, was deposed in 1986 and fled to France with his wife, Michele, and their two children. The couple separated in 1990 shortly after moving into the villa at Vallauris, their third home in France. Mr. Duvalier seldom left the heavily guarded grounds. Mr. Duvalier himself discreetly moved out in February after a court ordered him to pay 500,000 francs (\$87,000) in back rent, the daily reported. He also left several unpaid tabs at local shops.

Iran wants more leads with Africa

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran's foreign minister, Ali Akbar Velayati, Wednesday called for practical steps to boost commercial ties with African nations. Tehran Radio reported. The broadcast, monitored in Cyprus, said Mr. Velayati was speaking in Tehran on his return from a five-nation African tour. "African countries are very anxious to make use of our industrial products," Mr. Velayati told the radio. He called on the government and entrepreneurs to be "more serious" about promoting trade. "One of the main reasons that products we have promoted at trade exhibitions there are so welcomed is because few countries can compete with our prices and deliver our quality, which is quite high," Mr. Velayati said. On his tour, Mr. Velayati visited Burkina Faso, Uganda, Kenya, Namibia and Guinea.

Taiwan jails Chinese hijacker for 10 years

TAIPEI (R) — Taiwan sentenced a hijacker to 10 years in prison on Wednesday in an attempt to end a spate of hijackings that saw 11 Chinese airliners commandeered to the island since last April, state television reported. The district court in the northern country of Taoyuan sentenced Zhang Hai, 27, a driver working for the city government in the northern Chinese city of Tangshan, after convicting him of air

piracy. The court showed leniency because Mr. Zhang surrendered to Taiwanese authorities, the television said. He could have faced the death sentence. Mr. Zhang, armed with fruit knives and toothpaste tubes under his shirt which he claimed were explosives, hijacked a Xiamen Airlines Boeing 737 to Taiwan last Nov. 5 and asked for asylum. He is among 15 Chinese asylum-seekers who have hijacked 11 Chinese planes to Taipei since April last year. Nine of the others have been jailed for up to 13 years by Taiwan courts, while the rest are awaiting trial.

French court orders return of 2 Algerians

LYON (AP) — Two Algerian youths hastily expelled from France for allegedly attacking police during student riots last month will be allowed to return here. The interior ministry, which had ordered the expulsions March 23, agreed Wednesday to uphold a court ruling suspending the order and authorised the pair to return. The court order, issued earlier in the day, struck a blow against Interior Minister Charles Pasqua's tough restrictions on immigrants, which include rapid expulsions for lawbreakers deemed a "threat to the public order." Mouloud Madaci, 18, and Abdu Hakim Youbi, 19, were accused by Mr. Pasqua of attacking police during nationwide riots against a law lowering the minimum wage for youths. They were put on a boat for Algeria two days after their arrest. Their families and anti-racism activists challenged the expulsion, saying that the pair had spent nearly their entire lives in France and barely understood Arabic, the language of Algeria. "He can't take it anymore. He was crying on the phone last night," Mr. Youbi's father, Tahar, said in the Lyon court after the ruling.

Israeli foreign minister to visit Turkey

ANKARA (R) — Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres will visit Turkey next week to discuss the Middle East peace process, officials said Wednesday. "We find it positively that Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) have heeded the suggestions of many countries including Turkey and agreed to continue talks," Turkish Foreign Ministry spokesman Ferhat Ataman said. He said Turkey was ready to make all contributions to the peace process. Mr. Peres will visit Ankara and Istanbul from April 19-23. He will also discuss bilateral issues such as an agreement to prevent double taxation and encourage mutual investments.

EU to sue Greece over Macedonia

BRUSSELS (AP) — The European Union's (EU) executive agency announced Wednesday that it will file suit against Greece if the member nation does not lift its trade embargo against neighbouring Macedonia. EU foreign affairs chief Hans van den Broek said the 12-nation trading bloc would refer the embargo disagreement to the European Court of Justice, its highest court. Legal proceedings are scheduled to begin on April 13, giving both Greece and the EU a week "to reconsider their positions," he said. "What we tried to say today is that even if the cause is right, the means are wrong," Mr. Van den Broek told reporters after a meeting of the executive agency, the European Commission. Greece banned the shipment of all goods, except food and medicine, to its landlocked neighbour on Feb. 16. Greece has demanded that Macedonia stop using an ancient Greek symbol on its flag and change its constitution before the two countries enter a dialogue on Macedonia's name and other issues. Greece claims Macedonia has usurped an ancient Greek name and has designs on the Greek province of Macedonia.

China reports 1.24 million prisoners

BEIJING (AP) — China had 1.24 million prisoners at the end of 1993, the Justice Ministry said Wednesday in an apparent effort to refute unofficial reports that millions more are jailed. An unidentified ministry official quoted by the Xinhua news agency said China's prisons "maintained good order" last year, with misbehaviour by inmates at a 10-year low and escapes down to 1.4 per thousand, or about 1,740, the lowest in 45 years. The brief report did not say how many prisoners were being held for political offenses, but officials have previously put that figure at close to 4,000. Western human rights groups have challenged China's prisoner counts in the past.